National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Canadian Theses Service

Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Previously copyrighted materials (journal articles, published tests, etc.) are not filmed.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

Les documents qui font déjà l'objet d'un droit d'auteur (articles de revue, tests publiés, etc.) ne sont pas microfilmés.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30.

NL-339 (r. 88/04)

Canada

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

SEEKING AN 'IMAGINED COMMUNITY': COMMUNAL VISIONS IN NIGERIAN CIVIL-WAR LITERATURE

BY

© CRAIG W. McLUCKIE

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF ....MASTER OF ARTS........................

DEPARTMENT OF ....ENGLISH..............................

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
SPRING, 1988

Permission has been granted to the National Library of Canada to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film.

The author (copyright owner) has reserved other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her written permission.

L'autorisation a été accordée à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de microfilmer cette thèse et de prêter ou de vendre des exemplaires du film.

L'auteur (titulaire du droit d'auteur) se réserve les autres droits de publication; ni la thèse ni de longs extraits de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation écrite.

ISBN 0-315-42703-5

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR: ......CRAIG W.MCLUCKIE................

TITLE OF THESIS: .....SEEKING AN 'IMAGINED COMMUNITY'..

...COMMUNAL VISIONS IN NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR LITERATURE...

DEGREE: ....MASTER OF ARTS...................

YEAR THIS DEGREE GRANTED: ....1988..............

Permission is hereby granted to THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

Craig W. McLuckie
(Student's signature)

11154 - 70 AVENUE
(Student's permanent address)

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
T6H 2G8

Date: 08 March 1988

You artists, novelists,
Dramatists, poets,
...
I see you
Studying the situation
And plotting the next move;
...
You scholar seeking after truth
...,
Can you explain
The African philosophy
On which we are reconstructing
Our new societies?

-- "Song of Ocol"
Okot p'Bitek

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled SEEKING AN 'IMAGINED COMMUNITY': COMMUNAL VISIONS IN NIGERIAN CIVIL-WAR LITERATURE

submitted by CRAIG W. McLUCKIE

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS

(Supervisor)

Date: 13 January 1988.

Dedication

There is an African saying that tells us when an old man dies the village loses its library. Peter Baird and George McLuckie, my grandfathers, emphasize its truth. Ronald and Doreen McLuckie, my parents, relieve its severity.

Abstract

In his discussion of Wole Soyinka's war writings, Abiola Irele asserts that:

> Literature is a poor vehicle of social thought, and literary images cannot have the same clarity as ideas worked out in the framework of a social philosophy.

This generalization stands opposed to the increasing number of literary works, in English, which imaginatively re-create the social upheavals and the climate of the Biafran period.

Assuming a socio-historical perspective, the thesis critically examines ideas of community and communal identity through a stylistic and thematic interpretation of selected civil-war writings, both fictional and non-fictional. Kole Omotoso's The Combat is paired with Cyprian Ekwensi's Survive the Peace to reveal two approaches to, and depictions of, the populist community. S.O. Mezu's Behind the Rising Sun and I.N.C.Aniebo's The Anonymity of Sacrifice represent the Biafran perspective, while commenting critically upon Ojukwu's eleventh principle of the revolution: "THE BIAFRAN REVOLUTION IS COMMITTED TO CREATING A SOCIETY NOT TORN BY CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS AND CLASS ANTAGONISMS."

Wole Soyinka's position, as the pre-eminent Nigerian writer in English, ensures the inclusion of his writings that arise from the war: The Man Died: prison notes of Wole Soyinka, "Poems from Prison," and Season of Anomy.

The implicit structure of this three part thesis reflects a class-oriented social hierarchy. Only Soyinka's political and artistic creations successfully negate this hierarchy. Consequently, his aesthetics come closest to the creation of art works which posit a unified, imagined community of Nigerians.

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge, with gratitude, the assistance and support of the following people. Jeanne Boekelheide provided an error free first draft of the thesis, as well as an abundance of patience and support. She probably knows more of the Scots character than she cares to remember. Rick Mayer offered criticism and advice; he also shared bevvy and a few bruises. Francis Aleba read and discussed various drafts, remaining mindful of when the ego would accept a beating. Patrick Mukakanya offered a generous commentary on the final draft. Dean MacKay's observations and page-by-page discussion of the end product improved its clarity and prepared me for the defence. My appreciation is extended to these friends individually and as a group.

I would also like to thank my supervisor, Professor Ronald Ayling, for his guidance, criticisms and combination of heid n' boot. Professor P. Hjartarson provided a thoughtful reading of the thesis, and much needed criticism of my passive (positionless?) style. Professor Robert Wilcocks provokes.

Contents

PAGE

Introduction.. 1

Chapter 1: The Populist Community:
Kole Omotoso's The Combat and Cyprian Ekwensi's Survive the Peace...............14

Chapter 2: The War Within Biafra:
Communal Schisms in S.O. Mezu's Behind the Rising Sun and I.N.C. Aniebo's The Anonymity of Sacrifice................60

Chapter 3: The Aesthetics of Social Change:
Art and Activism in Selected Writings by Wole Soyinka.........................106

Conclusion...165

Notes..171

Bibliography...188

Introduction

> The Nigerian Civil War made a searing impact on the consciousness, not just of Nigerians, but of Africans as a whole. To the entire continent it served as a paradigm of the agonizing teething problems African countries have to experience in the process of readjustment and in the attempt to resolve their more catastrophic colonial legacies. The African writer who has made it his business not only to record the process of change, but also to serve in his own peculiar way as an agent of change, was bound to react very sensitively to this traumatic conflict. Consequently the Nigerian Civil War has given rise to a whole corpus of new novels....[1]

Eldred Durosimi Jones' editorial concisely summarizes the effect of the civil war on Nigerian literary attitudes, while it also forms the basis for questions about the effectiveness and suitability of the literary production of the last fifteen years. Just what are the "peculiar way[s]" the writer acts "as an agent of change?" What kind of "sensitivity" does the writer employ?

For whom and to what end are the novels aimed? Are these literary works functioning in the arena of art or politics or both? Is the effect of the writing therapeutic, propagandistic, descriptive, unifying, or divisive? The search for answers to these questions is where this thesis is based. It is restricted to five novelists and their writings which bear directly on the civil war, so it cannot be considered a comprehensive or exhaustive study of Nigerian Civil War literature.

The novel is the sole literary genre represented here because it is the most socially relevant and accessible of all literary genres.Futhermore, it is the dominant genre in African (and Nigerian) Literature at this time. I agree with Milan Kundera when he says that

> ... the novel can say something that can't be said any other way. But just what this specific thing is, it is very difficult to say. You could say, for example, that the novel's purpose is not to describe society, because there are certainly better ways of doing that. Nor does it exist to describe history, because that can be done by historiography. Novelists are not here to denounce stalinism because Solzhenitsyn can do that in his proclamations. But the novel is the only way to

> describe, to show, to analyze, to peel away human existence in all its aspects. I don't see any intellectual activity that can do what the novel accomplishes. ... The novel doesn't answer questions: it offers possibilities. ... And this is precisely the task of all novelists: to challenge, constantly, the principal notions on which our existence is based.[2]

Although only a single genre is represented in this thesis, a multitude of possibilities for the Nigerian community do surface in the post-war period of national reconciliation.

Indeed, Benedict Anderson's study of nationalism draws together the literary product and its social purpose, in terms that elucidate Kundera's point. In nationalism, Anderson writes,

> ... the search was on ... for a new way of linking fraternity, power and time meaningfully together. Nothing perhaps more precipitated this search, nor made it more fruitful, than print-capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways.[3]

For the creative product and the dissemination of that product to pull together a "community" still suffering from the bitter antagonisms and hatred of a fraternal war, there needs to be communicated understanding; the literary medium can do this job in a purer, less biased way than the other media because fictional plots and characters can sit closer to the spirit of events. Abiola Irele, an eminent Nigerian literary critic, believes that literature cannot foster the understanding required by such a sensitive issue. He writes of Wole Soyinka's war writings that

> Literature is a poor vehicle of social thought, and literary images cannot have the same clarity as ideas worked out in the framework of a social philosophy.[4]

I believe that Irele is wrong, as I hope the following pages will illustrate. A social philosophy may be clearer initially, but as its programme becomes deified by its advocates, the humaneness of its intent will be lost: the betterment of humanity will be forgotten because minds and resources are concentrated upon the system's (the institutionalized social philosophy's) perpetuation. In literature humanity is ever-present in the weaknesses and strengths of its vision which, more than a social philosophy, reflect the chaotic and unsystematized nature of existence.

In addition to the question of the appropriateness of literature as a means to unified social development is the question of audience. Only ten percent of Nigeria's population is literate in English (twenty-five percent literacy for all of the indigenous languages including English). How is literature of use when it reaches only a small, educated portion of the population? The Nigerian answer has been, primarily, to write in the language accessible to the 'majority', whether it be the use of pidgin, semi-literate, formal or imaginatively creative English. From the traders of Onitsha to accomplished craftsmen like Chinua Achebe, English is the language of choice because "the works of the vast majority [of writers who use non-'world' languages] will be closed to the rest of the world for ever. ... There is certainly a great advantage to writing in a world language."[5] Achebe's stated audience may appear to be overwhelmingly non-Nigerian, but that impression fails to take into account radio and television broadcasts of literary works, as well as other public (including village) readings of the works. To write in an indigenous language (Igbo, Yoruba, or Hausa, for example) would be to limit one's Nigerian audience, while also implicitly advancing a tribal rather than a nationalist consciousness. It is for this reason that the "decolonizers" of African literature--Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa Jemie and Ihechukwu Madubuike--accept the use of

English as a contemporary necessity, stressing that "national criteria are more important in determining critical standards than mere language criteria".[6] English is a colonial language and it is ironically the only lingua franca that does not pose the threat of intra-national colonialism/imperialism:

> Though cultural imperialists have used the language criterion as a subterfuge for appropriating to their national literatures work done by persons from outside their nation, language is not the crucial factor in determining the national or regional literature to which a particular work belongs. Inclusion within a national literature is something to be determined by shared values and assumptions, world outlook and other fundamental elements of culture--ethos, in short (Chinweizu, 12).

Consistent with the decolonizers' concerns has been the literary productivity of Nigerians. The Onitsha market literature, which flourished from the close of the Second World War until the beginning of the Nigerian Civil War, reflected an unconscious belief in "shared assumptions" and a hoped-for compatibility in "world outlook". The Marxist aesthetician Mikhail Lifschitz understands the desire of the market traders to write when he asserts: "Artistic modification of the world is ... one of the ways of assimilating nature. Creative activity is merely one instance of a realization of an idea or a purpose in the material world; it is a process of objectification."[7] In this process the early Onitsha pamphleteers were content with a small financial gain, so long as they had the opportunity to educate the community morally. This pedagogical intent represented an objectification of their world view to promote the basis for an eventual communal understanding.

Federal forces bombed Onitsha repeatedly during the civil war, gutting it, killing or displacing most of its inhabitants, and thus destroying a major economic centre, and the first major creative and distributing centre of Nigerian literature. Research undertaken by Don Dodson in the 1970s shows that the market was a long way from returning to its past stature. Seventy-five pamphlets, primarily pre-war in origin, were available, while only seven booksellers were functioning.[9] The fact that four young publishers had moved into the Onitsha area held some promise for the future; however, the later success of Heinemann's African Writers Series (originating in the mid-1960s)--which includes four of the five novels to be discussed--and of Macmillan's Pacesetter Series (originating in the mid-1970s), seems to have sealed the tomb and any opportunity of revitalizing the chapbook tradition.

The novels of the Heinemann and the Macmillan series have met with enormous success (Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, for instance, has sold more than 2,000,000 copies since its publication in 1958[10]), and, under Achebe's tutelage as the Heinemann Series' General Editor, have enlarged the Nigerian literary community and 'canon'. The majority of novelists are of eastern Nigerian (Igbo) origin, a region that has historically shown a greater willingness for education and the appropriation of elements of Western technology.

The early novels were a direct outgrowth of the writing found in Onitsha, specifically Cyprian Ekwensi's People of the City (1962) and Beautiful Feathers (1962). As writers became more proficient, bold experiments were undertaken: Gabriel Okara's The Voice (1970) written in English, but conforming to the Ijaw oral tradition is a superb and successful example of such experimentation. The writings of Chinua Achebe reveal a masterful control of English and of the realist consciousness that helps to structure his novels. Moreover, Achebe's ability to create the imaginative English equivalent of Igbo proverbs gives his work a distinctively African texture.

In the western region a limited number of forays have been made into the realm of novel writing, primarily by Amos Tutuola and Wole Soyinka. Tutuola, in a technique that compares with Okara's, fused Yoruba oral tales and elements of their syntactical patterns with English narratives. The educated, institutionally employed critics had little time, initially, for Tutuola. They typed him a failure, and more, they believed--snobbishly--that Tutuola projected an image of the cute, ignorant nigger for the world at large. Other critics have proven more receptive to Tutuola's work; it is at least interesting in its technique and content. More recently, African critics have re-evaluated Tutuola's work finding that his "corruption" of English suits their decolonising ends because of the original African stamp that it contains.

Soyinka, a "verbal pyrotechnician", has written two novels, both of which investigate the problems facing his country. These novels, however, are marked by their portrayal of the individual consciousness: artists as liminal figures within the community. Soyinka is by far the most resourceful Nigerian literary artist.

The novel continued developing in form and content from the publication of Achebe's Things Fall Apart (1958), and then, with the advent of the Nigerian Civil War, declined. According to J.P. O'Flinn,

> ... in the years 1967-1969 inclusive the rest of black Africa produced twenty-four novels, Nigeria/Biafra only five, and of these latter the majority were in the hands of the publishers before hostilities started.[11]

At the war's close, and for several years thereafter, few novels were written or published. The reason for this was the role various artists played in government (e.g. T.M. Aluko was Minister of Public Works, Western State) during the war and "in the reconstruction work in the post-war period" (O'Flinn, 49). Since 1972, the Heinemann African Writers Series has published over twenty-three novels by Nigerians; this does not in itself indicate a re-flourishing of the novel form. A review of recent literary production shows that over twenty-nine Nigerian works have been written about the civil war. Moreover, ten autobiographies which relate thematically to this period have also been identified. Thus, although an understandable decline in the literary output of Nigerians during and immediately after the civil war is evident, a more diverse and exciting state in the arts has developed since then. Again, the majority of the writing has been undertaken by authors of eastern Nigerian origin, but the slowly growing number of artists from other ethnic groups and among women holds great promise for the future. A more diversified literary community that adheres to the social commitment found in early Nigerian writing points, with advances in literacy, to one method of unifying the country's diverse social groups.

Nevertheless, new problems are already on the horizon.

Elechi Amadi, in his civil war novel Estrangement (1986), concludes the civil war with the defeat of women in the battle of the sexes (a contentious point in itself and a reaffirmation of the political status quo), while he also envisions class conflict: "The gulf between the rich and the poor widens daily, and the estrangement between the two deepens."[12] One possibility arising from the civil war literature is that nothing changed, but this vision is a conservative approach akin to the politicians Achebe depicts in The Trouble with Nigeria:

> In the life-time of many Nigerians who still enjoy an active political career, Nigeria was called 'a mere geographical expression' not only by the British... but even by our 'nationalists' when it suited them to retreat into tribe to check their more successful rivals from other parts of the country.[13]

Amadi chooses to leave Nigeria as a reunited family[14] that has seemingly learned nothing from the war. He also chooses to leave it as a union, born from the war's disruptiveness, between an eastern woman (Alekiri) and a northern man (Dansuku) but with Alekiri's new found independence subverted, relinquished to dependence on her mate: Dansuku proposes marriage; Alekiri "whimpered as she lay limp in his arms, benumbed by a strange mixture of desire and despair" (Estrangement, 244, my stress). Assuring the predominance of the northern male symbolically places a reunited Nigeria back into the hands of the autocratic northerners, who were much to blame for the civil war.

If Amadi is conservative politically in the conclusion he chooses for Estrangement, his thinking is somewhat more reasonable in relation to social cleavages brought about through the hierarchial nature of society. Where Amadi's thoughts were implicit but unsupported in the early stages of this thesis, the stratification of society has become explicit in the thesis' three part structure. Chapter one concentrates on literature in its conscious (Omotoso) and unconscious (Ekwensi) manifestations, for the masses, as it relates to the popular national consciousness-raising efforts of the decolonizers in their aesthetic program. Chapter two investigates what is apparently bourgeois literature,[15] the novels of Mezu and Aniebo, from the perspective of Georg Lukacs' conversation "Society and the Individual." The third chapter unravels the dense and rich works of Wole Soyinka, the only writer in this thesis who has produced a substantial body of literature including several pieces on the civil war, from which Season of Anomy has been selected for extensive treatment. Soyinka is uncompromising about his views on art; for this he has been at the centre of a critical debate on the European hegemony of African literature. Soyinka's knowledge and use of European languages and literary forms have typed him an elitist, in his detractors' terminology.

Aesthetics--the form and the reasons behind it--comprise part of each discussion, but the emphasis in this discussion is thematic and social. What are the separate national possibilities that arise? Are there areas, aesthetically or thematically, where these converge? And, is artistic commitment, as Chinweizu says,

> a matter of orientation, a matter of perceiving social realities and of making those perceptions available in works of art in order to help promote understanding and preservation of, or change in, the society's values and norms (Chinweizu, 253)?

or is it, as Irele implies, little more than a jumbled up and chaotic expression of a mind unable to transcend and objectify social, aesthetic and political boundaries?

We are waiting around for answers and praying that those who can see things will sometimes speak in accents which the few of us who read English can understand. For we are tired of betrayals, broken promises and forever remaining in the dark.

-- Ama Ata Aidoo,
"Poets and Ostriches,"
West Africa 2641
(January 13 1968)
40-41.

CHAPTER ONE

The Populist Community: Kole Omotoso's The Combat and Cyprian Ekwensi's Survive the Peace

The group most neglected by government, media and intellectuals in Nigerian society has been the populist community of literate and semi-literate working people, peasants and traders. Even the Marxist historian Walter Rodney reluctantly admitted that his analysis of Africa had "been focussed on the role of educated Africans."[1] Such neglect is a common enough occurrence, but it is a failure to the extent that a large and active element of the population finds its contribution unrecorded, its concerns unaddressed. True, the educated professionals have been at the fore of independence movements and of the subsequent governments of newly independent nations, [2] but it is false to assume that the absence of the "lower rungs" of society equates to their passivity and lack of involvement. For this reason the efforts of writers, who depict the lives of the masses and who set out to address them, must be seen as a noble step forward. The work of these writers should add new images and richness to the literature and a new dimension to the culture of Africa. Several works, in English, about the Nigerian Civil War speak directly to this "lowbrow" group, most notably, Achebe's Girls at War (1972), Omotoso's The Combat (1972), and Ekwensi's

Survive the Peace (1976) and Divided We Stand (1980). They are written not only by "lowbrow" authors using a popular medium to communicate with the common man,[3] but also by highly educated individuals who seek to address, to represent, or to influence the masses. In this chapter the work of Kole Omotoso, who writes explicitly for the masses, and Cyprian Ekwensi, who has an enormous mass readership (sales of his books exceed 640,000 copies worldwide)[4] are examined against a discussion of the general cultural program of the decolonizers of African literature. Further, the cultural program's validity will be tested against these populist works.

Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike's (the decolonizers) ideas are the most pertinent, to date, in relation to the African masses because they believe that

> ... the most effective way to cure [writers] of their europhilia, and to wean them from the neo-colonialist hegemony of European culture, would be to generate an extensive African audience, a nationalist, right-minded one that would displace the Western audience from its insidious position as the primary audience of African writers (Chinweizu et al, 292).

The creation of such an audience is dependent upon mass public education and on the ability of the literary artist to relate to the concerns of the masses. Readership and a common ground are the requisites. The elite are excluded from this program because they are viewed as "sell-outs" to their former European colonial masters. Thus, the decolonizers' self-appointed task is "to probe the ways and means whereby Western imperialism has maintained its hegemony over African literature..." (Chinweizu et al, xi). They discern the hegemony to emanate from the African writer's use of alien forms, such as the novel, and so they call for the incorporation of known African forms, orality for instance, into the work of art:

> If the parity between the oral mode and the written mode of narrative is acknowledged, and if the reciprocity between oral and written fictional forms is acknowledged, we see no danger in applying to written forms concepts abstracted from the oral tradition...(Chinweizu et al, 35).

In this way the reader is offered something culturally familiar, while the writer--freed from European forms and the ideology therein--may begin experimenting anew from within his and his people's own tradition.

If the African writer continues to work within the European tradition, then, the decolonizers claim, she/he denies his/her history and people. A work of art is more than "pure craft [because of] the values it urges upon its readers, implicitly as well as explicitly" (Chinweizu et al, 140). Consequently European forms will embody European values, unless the forms are changed and brought into the African tradition in literary hybrids and syntheses. Ian Bell's comments on literature offer lucid commentary on this point. Bell writes that

> Literature is powerful and dangerous. It can give us ways of seeing which intensify our experience, but it can also distort and limit our view of ourselves and others. In literature, as in all repositories of images, our culture has fabricated an authorized version of itself, seeking to subdue its internal contradictions and volatility by consolidating a restricted menu of images of its constituent groups. Sometimes these images are so radically distorted that they produce widespread resistance, but more often they slip by unnoticed, and maintain their stealthy vigilance over

our perception.[5]

In response to the distorted vision European forms and critics have created (that is according to the decolonizers), Chinweizu et al have built an aesthetic program that they hope will return African literature to all of her peoples through commitment which is oriented to "social realities," wherein the writer's vision of society is "germane to the concerns of his community" (Chinweizu et al, 252).

The aesthetics of Chinweizu et al center on six points. First, the lucidity, precise and apt imagery, as well as the relatively uncomplicated syntax of orature (oral literature) are commended (247). Second, an efficiency in "structure and logistics" is required to enable the content of the narrative to reach the reader with a minimum of diversion. Nevertheless, some divergence is acceptable when it "leads to felicitous, mellifluous, and apt expression," without negatively affecting the flow of the narrative. Similarly, to enhance comprehension, "personification of animals, deities and ghouls evokes them more vividly than an abstract presentation" (247). Fifthly, the work is made memorable by "its fidelity to traditional forms and themes, the importance of [the] social issues... and[its] contribution...toward raising our consciousness" (247-48).

Lastly, the work "must capture and recreate the tone, flavor and texture of life in our society [for the ease of comprehension of] those who read us" (248). In essence, the decolonizers are aiming for critical realism "because it does not spread a gloss of sanctity on the past [and it] prevents us from treating exemplars as sacrosanct [therefore] it allows for the evolution of new forms through adaptations from the old" (258).

It would appear from the foregoing list that Stanley Macebuh is justified when he calls the decolonizers' aesthetic program into question. Macebuh insists that they present "a quite constricted notion of the principle of 'aesthetic pleasure'...."[6] Indeed, when they identify "the qualities of the oral tradition that should be emulated in good contemporary African poetry [and fiction], it limits itself to recommendations of technique" (Macebuh, 206, his stress). And, if technique is their only concern, then "what is the meaning of tradition, and what essential justifications may we find for recommending that it be emulated?" (Macebuh, 206). While Macebuh's criticisms are justified in relation to a well-educated readership and for a highly developed literary (rather than oral) community (those Africans who are able to read Wole Soyinka's metaphysical works, for instance; works that Macebuh is defending), they are somewhat amiss in relation to the decolonizers' stated aim. They wish "to clear the bushes and stake out new foundations for a liberated African modernity" (Chinweizu et al, 1), with the broadest possible African audience in mind. Their intent is more limited than Macebuh, or the decolonizers themselves, would seem to allow. Where Macebuh defends Soyinka against the limitations Chinweizu et al would impose on his abilities to build upon world literary forms, the decolonizers promote the re-affirmation of a widespread national literature. The success of the positive aspects of the decolonization program might eventually lead to a world understanding and communion with less fortunate (i.e., educationally and professionally) Nigerians. For the moment, however, the theory will be examined against the populist works of Omotoso and Ekwensi.

Told in the third person, Omotoso's The Combat[7] is set in Western Nigeria, during the harmattan (a dry wind which blows during winter on the W. African coast); the action covers six days (Monday through Saturday), and concerns the motivation and preparation for a combat between two friends. Chuku Debe, one of the two protagonists, awakens to the drum signal on Radio Nigeria and,

> His feet found the rungs of the ladder and he descended

> to the ground floor of their four-roomed building. He collected the bucket and went to the well. When he got to the well he saw that Ojo had left some water for him. He emptied the water into his bucket and carried it to the bamboo bathroom. Chuku took off his wrapper and spread it to cover the entrance to the bathroom (The Combat, 2).

Omotoso continues in this painstakingly realistic vein to describe the physicality of Chuku, his surroundings, and his daily rituals. The point is to (re)familiarize the reader with his/her world. Noticing the actions and the sequence in which they are performed conditions the reader to the mode of narrative discourse: it is a world that we can inhabit because of its familiarity. It is a response to the decolonizers' call for the recreation of the "tone, flavor and texture of life in our society" (Chinweizu et al, 248). Chuku dresses and leaves the house, but immediately returns because he has forgotten his car keys and has left a candle burning (3). Such a slight flaw in character endears Chuku to us, makes him more real, because we have experienced this type of forgetfulness ourselves.

Leaving the house, Chuku walks to his black Morris Minor, which he ritually cleans and then drives to a breakfast stall. At the stall we encounter ritual action--the making and consuming of tea:

> The boy...produced a glass cup...he held the kettle in his right hand and the glass in the left tilting the spout of the kettle into the glass and allowing the yellow liquid to cascade into the glass. When the glass was almost full to the brim, he put down the kettle and brought out another glass. Then he started to pour the contents of the first glass cup first into one, and then into the other, of the two glasses. Satisfied that the tea was now ready for drinking he offered it to Chuku who took the glass. He blew some vapour on the surface of the glass and drank the tea in one go. The boy stood where he was, waiting, knowing that Chuku needed more than one glass of tea after his breakfast (5).

The boy's knowledge reinforces our sense of the habitual nature of this activity. And, because the ritual is unbroken, Chuku maintains his sleepy, unconscious progress through the day. He fails to respond to the shouting news-vendor--" `Coup d'etat in Lagos. Akintola is dead! Sardauna is dead!! The soldiers have taken over!!!'" (5)--because he is, as is his habit, looking ahead "in the back pages [of the newspaper] to see what the tips for next Saturday's U.K. games were like" (5). Unbroken habit has produced an 'awakened insomnia' in Chuku (the reader can identify it as his/her own) that prevents him from reacting to dramatic changes in the government, in history. Because events have not yet impinged upon Chuku's own ordering of his life, they go unnoticed.

And so Chuku drives off to the Texaco station where his friend Ojo Dada works. The story breaks off for a brief description of the general decay of the once deserted station, a process which Ojo has slowed down. This situation parallels the state of the bookshop across the street, which "was called something else these days but nobody remembered the new name. It was the CMS Bookshop. And the CMS Bookshop it remained" (6). Habit. The Texaco station, too, remains its former self because it retains its form in the people's consciousness. Ojo, like Chuku, is affected by form, by the shape or sequence of events and objects rather than by events themselves: Chuku is questioned by Ojo about the coup, and his response is that it is none of his business (8). Ojo berates Chuku for his apathy, but never refers to the coup again. The historical event has become just "another coup" (10), another intangible event for them. Their apathy toward history and its lesson will later result in the combat--a Biafran War in miniature, significant only because it happens to them.

Chuku, his morning pre-work rituals complete, got into his taxi, "put the gear into reverse, slapping his foot on the accelerator. The car roared backwards, held up for only a fraction of a minute. It was Isaac's body that held it up for the fraction of a minute"(13).[8] Unwittingly, but nevertheless through negligence, through a failure to involve himself totally in his environment, Chuku has killed or maimed Isaac. As Balogun observes, "Without warning reality is replaced with fantasy" (115). Fantasy predominates now because Ojo jumps on his Solex scooter and chases Chuku across town, eventually confronting him, in an absurdist manner:

> 'You're the one who is in trouble C.D.'
> 'Waten I do now?'
> 'You ran over that boy.'
> 'What kind boy?'
> 'Does it matter what boy? You run
> over somebody. That's what's important.' (13)
> 'You must go back and apologize for what you've
> done,' Ojo Dada kept on insisting (14).

> 'You must apologize for it or else I am not going to live in the same house with you. The alternative is...'
>
> Chuku Debe looked at his friend and frowned. What was the alternative? He was still convinced that his friend must be mad, but he was getting angry now. He did not like being held up so early in the week.
>
> But he was not ready to accept that he had run over anybody, or even if he had, to apologize for it.
>
> 'Or else you must accept my challenge to single combat' (15).

The transition from reality to fantasy is not "elusive", as Balogun suggests (115); there is a definite break in the realism at this point, and subsequently the fantastic or absurd will be harnessed onto what reality remains. And this is where the thematic break takes place, for to enter an absurd, fantastical phase, which will permit the development of the Biafran theme, necessitates an unrealistic response to events. Neither character concerns himself with Isaac's condition, the need for an ambulance, and so on. The chivalric call to combat seems particularly callous, because it is only done for form's sake, the formal code of conduct of the men. Omotoso alienates the reader from both men by ironically undercutting their positions and s/he must read the allegory in a dispassionate, but morally heightened way; the body is a persistent reminder to the reader that in aiming for the main event s/he will miss the smaller--but no less important--events.

Dieter Riemenschneider has indicated that from the hit-and-run incident on the

> ...characters are not made to interact as individuals but as analogies or symbols. This enables the novelist...to convey an insight into fundamentals [for example the] short sightedness, righteousness and lack of mutual understanding of human beings as the root causes of their quarrel.[9]

Riemenschneider's criticism is an astute assessment of The Combat's strengths, for the story never falls into a "mere presentation of ideas" (Riemenschneider, 84) simply because the reader is never allowed to forget that the characters are his/her representatives. We identify with the situations, and through them become aware of our actions. Riemenschneider further suggests that "at first the quarrel between two friends appears to be a moral question only" (84). It is a moral question, but not one that will be resolved by an admission of fault and an apology, for both parties are so empty of life that they cannot think to aid Isaac; rather, they must pursue a course of further killing, an act, presumably, that asserts their individual manhood. In the closing pages of his article, Riemenschneider summarily constructs a representational picture of the book:

> The interaction of these persona is a[s] simple as it is convincing with the two men representing quarrelling parties in Nigeria, their son the young Nigerian state and his mother the Nigerian nation (Riemenschneider, 84).

This commentary creates the impression that ideas, not people, are at the centre of the discussion, that there is no interaction of characters, only of ideas.[10] However, as Riemenschneider has stated:

> While at first the quarrel between two friends appears to be a moral question only...it turns out later that both of them have claimed [Isaac] as their son since

> birth but that the court had never arrived at a satisfactory decision (Riemenschneider, 84).

In his return to immediate human concerns, Omotoso doubles the power of his allegory: we accept the realistic situation, but draw away from the callousness; we reflect upon the absurdity of the social relations as they grow in (mock) heroic proportions, and through our implication, our early identity and involvement, realize that the individual--no matter how seemingly insignificant his position--always contributes to the course the larger community will take.

Ojo and Chuku go off to Lagos in search of sponsors for their combat. In the truck they "occupied separate benches" (19), the physical separation emphasizing the separation in their country, a separation which will soon end. However, engrossed in their personal history, the former friends ignore communal history:

> Ojo did not waste time on the front page which was taken up completely by a headline to the effect that peace was soon to return to Nigeria. Naturally Ojo did not see how he could ever be concerned personally in this (The Combat, 19).

The irony is not only that Ojo and Chuku are personally involved, but that they are also in the process of rekindling a larger conflict. The combat is advertised in the newspaper and trucks are laid on to transport people from Lagos (19); Ojo Dada seeks and gains sponsorship from the South Africans (30),who Omotoso caricatures (27-8); Chuku Debe, similarly, receives external aid from the Russians (37). Thus, Omotoso draws imperial intervention into the common man's affairs at the cost of Nigeria's automony in the future. The engagement the decolonizers emphasize is now fully present, for Omotoso is making a contribution by raising the consciousness of the masses to the role of imperialism in Nigeria, and its relationship to every man (Chinweizu et al, 248).

Perhaps the least damning lesson learned is our too great concern with sports. Remember, Chuku ignores the news of the coup in favour of the sports pages (5); later, the combat is advertised in the sports section (19); and finally, the ITV and the BBC negotiate to cover the combat, seeing it as a possible "Match of the Day" (55). Elechi Amadi shares this perception of the war, seeing international observers as referees. Extending the satire of combat as entertainment outside of Nigeria, in this way, permits Omotoso to implicate a larger community in events; more interest in peace by outsiders could probably have stopped the combat.

The narrative line concerning the paternity of the child and the association of the two men with Moni (Dee Madam) is skillfully interwoven with the narrative that leads to the combat. Again, Omotoso's purpose is to draw connections between the action(s) of an individual and those of a nation. At the hearing to decide fatherhood, negotiations fail: [11]

> Ojo Dada was to have the child...[b]ut...[t]he other man was to take Dee Madam and God willing they would produce their own child or children. [A swap was a possibility, but] [t]here was hardly anything concrete on which to base their negotiations (47, 49).

Although the possibility of a peaceful resolution is available, neither the son nor Dee Madam is present: mother and son (nation and state) are lost (although, in pointing to their absence, Omotoso makes sure of their presence in the reader's consciousness) because time has not been given to the consideration of these larger concerns.[12] In this way, we are prepared for further criticism of the men's (Ojo and Chuku/Gowon and Ojukwu) self-centeredness: "Is there any truth in the rumour that neither of you is going to fight, but that you will both choose some unfortunate men to fight for you?" (71). And with the thought of others fighting the battle, in addition to our remembrance that the son is missing, and that he is Isaac (76), the full force of the biblical allusion is brought home. Isaac was never supposed to have been sacrificed by his father; it was a test from which both were to return alive and reassured in their convictions about good and faith: trust. But, "after all the public postures they had taken, [these fathers as well as the counterparts in the government] had very little room to manoeuvre in private" (80).

Isaac dies quietly, and alone, free from "want" with "[n]othing to do. Just nothing" (85). The only peace for the child is in death (as it is for the state, for failure to struggle or submission is what death implies). So, through negative argument and image, Omotoso shows that for any community to survive there must be a constant attention to details, an awakening from sleep.

We never see the combat. Instead, we are left with the satirically pungent picture of Dee Madam holding a tenth birthday party for the well-dressed, but ripe, corpse of Isaac. The guests, unable to bear the smell of death, "ran out to their cars and drove away to the combat. They all wanted to be in at the kill" (88). The contradictory nature of the guests' response is at the core of Omotoso's attack: they cannot stand the presence of death, especially when it attacks their senses; yet they depart, not to escape or to reflect upon death, but , vicariously, to view the process by which death is attained. The duplicity found in the actions of the guests is hammered home, for Dee Madam "...returned to the body, lifted it, and placed it on the back seat. She got behind the wheel and drove off towards Sacred Heart School to watch the combat" (88). The mother drives, with dead child, to the scene of conflict, where her lover and the child's father may be killed. Her action is the more demeaning because she goes not to stop the fight, but rather, "to watch". No one wants to concern himself with the tragedy before him, all are passive and thereby, unreflectively and unwittingly, enter into life's next tragedy.

The Combat teaches that the thoughtless nature of all, but especially unfamiliar and violent, actions must be checked. The Combat is not "absolutely false, a complete failure in tone (see Dem-Say, 53), as Omotoso would have us believe, for he has written "only about that which he knows well and is skilled enough to handle well" (Chinweizu et al, 253). Here, Omotoso reflects Major Ademoyega's point about the success of the January 1966 coup d'etat, which he describes as a revolution: "The third major achievement of the revolution was that it jerked the nation from its political slumber and naivete."[13] It is this last accomplishment that permits Omotoso to enlist "the reader's sympathy for the wretched victims in our midst at the same time that he provokes the reader's wrath against those who cause agony and suffering for others" (Balogun, 110). Omotoso's reader learns about him/herself in the movement from microscopic to macroscopic events in this realistic-allegoric novel. But the question remains of where this awakening of the people's consciousness to their importance in history will lead, as well as whether or not it will be an enduring effect.

How does Omotoso's work fare in relation to the decolonizers' program, and are there any criticisms of their program that The Combat unveils? Both Omotoso and the decolonizers seek art forms that evoke the atmosphere of the society depicted: in The Combat Omotoso succeeds. Similarly theory and practice unite when the writer is engaged in the issues his community faces. Problems arise, nevertheless, in the area of language and technique. Omotoso describes the means whereby he attempts to win a mass African readership for The Combat:

> Simplicity of language and of technique is one of the most important characteristics of any literature whose appeal must be the masses of the people. Other characteristics are that such a literature must be brief

> and it must be cheap (Quoted in Balogun, 111).

These views reflect the decolonizers' tenets. There is a sense though in which the views expressed, while taking into account the severe educational problems African society (in an homogeneous, pan-African sense) face, are condescending. Presumably, to use complexity of form and of ideas is to create a work that lies beyond the reach of these people.[14] Restraint on cost is one matter, but restraint on challenge, on intellectual stimulation--which produces its own good social results--is quite another. This latter point reflects a failing in the decolonizers' program and, to a lesser extent, in Omotoso's novel.

Omotoso's addition of brevity as a criteria for populist fiction creates its own problems. At a brief eighty-eight pages *The Combat* is barely a novel, and that very brevity has left some of its constituent parts unexplained. These parts create puzzlement in the reader. Isaac, for instance, finds a penny that "he [does] not know...[is] no longer legal tender"(10). He cleans the coin and goes off to buy food, choosing a busy stall where the woman "might not, with some luck, check if the money [is] good or not"(11). If Isaac does not know that the money is no longer legal tender, then why should the narrator suggest that it is wise to try a busy stand? Omotoso, in his search for brevity, does not fulfill his obligation to produce a logically coherent narrative. The reader stops, dwells on the contradiction within the narrative, and finally questions the author and the validity of his message.[15]

The decolonizers write, in reference to the "new" basis for African literature, that

> Orature, being auditory, places high value on lucidity, normal syntax and precise and apt imagery. Language or image that is not vivid, precise or apt compels the listener to puzzle it out, interrupts his attention, and makes him lose part of the telling. We see no reason why these virtues of orature should be abandoned in literature (Chinweizu et al, 247).

Omotoso hindered the logic at one point in his narrative; his images grind it to a halt in other places. There are contextually irrelevant images, for instance, that force the reader to "puzzle it out" without gaining anything more from the narrative. Omotoso writes:

> He cut the bread into four almost equal parts; he slit each part again in two through the middle; then he

> inserted two akara balls and closed the two halves on the akara. This was his sandwich--first page bread, second page akara, and third page bread; or simply akara in hard-back (4).

The overall sense of The Combat is not lost in the telling here, for the narrative is in book form, and so it is always available for reference. Nevertheless, the quoted passage seems significant in a metafictional way; the reader puzzles over the image and, at best, realizes that the story has the same nourishing value as food. Not much is gained for the loss of fluidity in the unravelling of the tale. Indeed the message that the masses should awaken to the significance of their role within the nation's past, present and future is belittled by such narcissistic intrusions.

The decolonizers have an ally in Kole Omotoso because his work reflects the validity of their theory in its practical application. The relatively small (insignificant?) sales of The Combat (11,437 copies sold when it went out of print), however, give pause for thought. Something appears to have gone wrong because the mass African readership, for which the decolonization theory was produced, has not responded. For this reason, Cyprian Ekwensi's novel Survive the Peace[16], a bestseller, has been chosen to extend the critique of populist fiction directed toward a national culture.

Ekwensi offers complementary, and yet contradictory, statements about the community he inhabits, although it is very definitely Afro-centered. When he states, before the civil war, "I am an Ibo,"[17] he invokes specific traditions as well as a specific, ordered world-view. Transcribing that culture's oral tradition and translating it into a world language (in his early "Onitsha" pamphlets) he reveals a sense of pride in his heritage, opening up and offering his communal archives as a contribution to the international culture of a world community. However, the utterance "I am an Ibo" is also restrictive, for other traditions and other cultures are barred from this tribal community. Contrasting with this sense of tribal community, however, is Ekwensi's obvious regard for other cultures: Burning Grass (1962), his first published work in the African Writers Series, is subtitled "A Story of the Fulani of Northern Nigeria." Indeed, one could argue that Ekwensi's sense of his communal self is larger and is open to more than "just" being an Igbo. His subsequent publications, particularly People of the City (1963), Lokotown and Other Stories (1966), and Jagua Nana (1975), all emphasize his increasingly cosmopolitan outlook and concern: it is "the people, rather than the Igbo, of the city" who have come to represent Ekwensi's constituency. Margaret Laurence, an early critic of Nigerian literature, observes that

> [Ekwensi] is one of the few Nigerian writers who consistently brings into his novels people of all tribes. Indeed, in most of his novels there is a strong undercurrent of anti-tribalism, which is not a desire to abolish cultural or religious differences, but rather a conviction that these differences can and must be lived with.[18]

This growing interest in and observation of a progressively wider field of peoples must have led to Ekwensi's second declaration of community: "I love Nigeria...I know my country and I love it" (Quoted in Duerden and Pieterse, 83). Here, then, a sense of nation, expansion of his sense of identity in tribe, is explicit. This grander, imagined community, however, was undermined, limited, even usurped by Ekwensi's actions at the outbreak of national civil hostilities: he resigned his position as Director of Information, in the Federal Ministry of Information, and went off to raise financial and moral support for the Biafran cause. [19] Consequently, the image Ekwensi creates is one of a man whose horizons of self-definition are constantly expanding but, also, of a man who in a crisis feels that it is necessary to retreat to his next smallest communal self and defend it as he would defend himself: if the Igbos are wiped out, a great part of Ekwensi's sense of self goes with them. We are left with "I am an Ibo, who grew into a Nigerian, but when the root of my sense of self was endangered, I withdrew and became a Biafran."

A sense of self is inextricably tied to a sense of community; the community can be of any size; it can grow or shrink, but there will always be a "root" community, a foundation. Ekwensi has himself said:

> I lived in the North...right to the age of fifteen, and throughout my secondary school days I spent all my holidays in the North...However, I still regard Nkwelle in the East as my home, even though I didn't have any contact with it while I was growing up (Quoted in Dem-Say, 27, my stress).

Ekwensi here seems to identify 'home' with his tribal heritage but since he does so in the wake of war, a fragile air continues to permeate his conscious sense of communal self. No longer is there the expansive, supplementary remark that his home is in Nigeria (even though he lives in its capital, Lagos). This sense of home and the idealization of communal values is central to Ekwensi's first published war novel, Survive the Peace (1976), and it is this theme which I will examine in the ensuing discussion of that novel.[20]

Survive the Peace opens with "[l]aughter in the midst of tragedy" (3): James Odugo, the protagonist, and his fellow radio news journalists "had developed this habit of laughing at the routine lies they were called upon to dish out to the World [while] hundreds were dying every day--men, women, children--especially children" (3). They laugh to ease the pain of their own and their people's suffering. The narrative is set in the Biafran community near the war's close and explores from the outset the deeply felt historical reality of previous national (inter-tribal), tribal (interfamilial) and familial (inter-individual) relations. We are drawn to experience these disruptions by the third person narration of James Odugo's attempts to bring his family and life back into some semblance of order.

Odugo is separated by the war from his wife and children; he has had a relationship with Gladys, but is currently involved with a colleague--Vic (Victoria). In his search for his family, Odugo and Vic separate; Odugo subsequently has a brief affair with Benne, then leaves to return to his village. He finds his children, but his wife has gone; the pregnant Gladys arrives and they renew their relationship. This brief outline of the novel's main action resembles a description of Don Juan's or Casanova's life more than a novel about the tragedies of war, but, as Rosemary Colmer has pointed out: "The war is seen as an overwhelming force which breaks up couples and family units and throws individuals together in new patterns."[21] On the one hand, we view the divisiveness of war penetrating a smaller community (Biafra) and tearing it apart right down to the base level of individual relationships. On the other hand, the new formations, as they become more concrete, will be Ekwensi's portrayal of the community of the future.[22] Here, our focus is upon the break-up and initiation of personal and professional relationships as they relate to the character of James Odugo.

Odugo's position as a radio-journalist gives him a rare insight into one of the methods of fostering a sense of community.[23] Odugo tells lies (3); he presents a false sense of what is happening to the community, to raise its morale and to keep it together. Whereas, in actuality, the retreating Biafran soldiers have disrobed and disarmed themselves, their heads, "drooped with tiredness and defeat" (7), a broadcast states that, on the contrary, "Biafran troops today beat back an enemy attack..."(12). Ekwensi's juxtaposition of the two scenes emphasizes the need to believe in personally felt experience, not in second-hand, reported acts. Consequently the imagined nation of Biafra--produced to a large extent by media--has become a community of those one sees and with whom one interacts.

We are given conflicting ideas about Odugo's role, for though he is one of the "liars", he also carries a positive sense of his profession's role: "I'm a newsman. I must witness all" (8). However, during his observation of the fleeing soldiers Odugo becomes disillusioned in the nation he has helped to create, and so, believing the propaganda of imminent genocide,[24] he gets his lover, Vic, packs his car and leaves: Biafra narrows into the town of Umunevo, which narrows again to a community of two. Odugo's fully conscious awareness of his role in the war slowly awakens from these, first, conflicting ideas, which are lightly explained. In fact, his remarks to Vic equally apply to the shallow resolve he has had in his work: "all this is temporary anyway" (15), or: "This is our destination in the meantime, Vic. Remember everything is temporary..."(19). All of his activities--the relationship with Vic and with his work--are superficial, stop-gap measures, designed to occupy the days until peace arrives and the real business of living can be renewed. There is, then, an implicit criticism of Odugo, as there was of Ojo Dada and Chuku Debe, for not getting involved.

Entering the compound of Pa Ukoha marks the end of one stage of Odugo's quest for self and family, and the beginning of a new phase, for he has returned to his roots, and has encountered in Pa Ukoha a spiritual father. Rosemary Colmer correctly asserts that "...the younger generation...have to return home to the village before they can begin to assess the effect the war has had on their lives..." (Colmer, 52). At Pa Ukoha's home, Odugo is reminded of the values and traditions of his people--their code of conduct:

> They talked about the kola nut and how in some parts of Iboland the young man splits the nut and in other parts it was a task for elders who thus asserted their old age and their seniority. Finally it was agreed that Pa Ukoha had the right to delegate James Odugo (Survive the Peace, 27).

A code of conduct, of ritual and authority, is emphasized and re-established after the chaos of war. Moreover, those values are to be re-asserted elsewhere, posing the opportunity for the renewal of a larger communal base: "One whole nut went into Odugo's pocket. He who takes a kola nut home tells where it was offered to him" (27).[25]

Although there is a sense of renewal, of order, the older generation and their code have been affected. Benne, Pa Ukoha's daughter, sleeps with a large number of soldiers from whom she receives a supply of rationed or otherwise unavailable items:

> ...the family shared the loot and Benne acquired a special importance for her efforts and this importance made it difficult for anyone, having tasted of her loot, to reprimand her (31).

Woman has become provider, maintainer of the physiological needs of the family; an immoral act provides sustenance and thus preserves the spiritual and communal order of the elders. The rules change when "surviving the war and the peace". Odugo, amidst these simultaneously conflicting and complementary lifestyles, begins to awaken to and to clarify the larger, national events by listening to "different radio stations" (35), which give him the opportunity to analyze the validity of what he hears. Yet he vacillates, feeling that "he must be part of what was happening, yet he was here in Obodonta" (35), cut off from events: "He fretted about the scarcity of money, about what he must do next, about the safety of his life" (35). Still, Odugo has not fully entered into a community again, his life is what counts. Dieter Riemenschneider has argued that "the overall perception [of Odugo] which emerges is that of a rather superficial person whose concern is mainly with himself" (Riemenschneider, 83). While this is emphatically true of Odugo's quest in the first section of the novel, Odugo is still searching for his self, which he believes is associated with his sense of home. Odugo's return home, in the second section (the book's best section) reveals a positive growth in Odugo which affords less validity to Riemenschneider's criticisms. This growth is the re-establishment of the individual in a community, a sequel to the discarding of the dying community, which left him a man alone.

Odugo becomes involved with Benne, while Vic becomes increasingly involved with some soldiers. She does so to build a new life; Odugo's relationship with Benne is yet another learning experience:

> He was not in love with Benne. She meant little or nothing to him. Yet he felt sympathy for her, because she was the underdog of the family. And he knew that

> Benne had sensed his feelings and was taking advantage of them (67).

The predatory, providing, independent, yet vulnerable nature of the new woman marks her emancipation.[26] After Captain (Benne's husband) returns from the war with the skull of death (73)--a reminder of every man's mortality--Odugo profits from three more lessons before finally achieving the resolve to continue his quest.

His first lesson comes from Captain, who explains that "[y]ou told us lies but you kept us alive and hopeful. But for those lies, many of us could have committed suicide..."(70-1). It is unfortunate that Ekwensi adds Odugo's response of a shrug and "oh, well...!" (71). It is almost a frivolous response, but for the exclamatory tone: at the very least Captain's statement is a catalyst for further thought, which will permit Odugo to feel better about his earlier role.[27]

Second, the skull, in a very obvious way, reminds Odugo of his own mortality. Captain's speech, when he reveals the skull, reinforces Pa Ukoha's resolve because of the similarity in thought. Both men call for an egalitarian future (Pa Ukoha for a familial/village community, Captain for an African Community). Each character expounds his communal vision, but, obviously, the position of Captain's speech suggests a revision of Pa Ukoha's earlier statements.

Pa Ukoha:	Captain:
'No matter who is ruling us today, we ask for good water to drink and to wash. Good roads to carry our yams and cassava. Good schools to train our children. Good maternities to care for our wives in labour. Give us a place to worship our God--no, that one, we can build for ourselves. Finally, let us have peace, no more killing' (57).	'It will all be a waste of our time and blood if after this there is no peace--if we do not get the government we desire...a government to give us food at a cheap price, clean water, comfortable houses, paying jobs, education for our children who survive, medical attention, everything that means Africa is independent, that we understand why people go to war' (74).

The contrast is obvious. Pa Ukoha does not care about the larger community of the nation: he just wants his smaller, immediate community looked after, in a positive, equitable manner.[28]

Captain, too, desires equality, but in a larger, pan-African framework, where all will participate. The former is the groundwork for the latter in the decolonizers' nationalist program.

Two extremes exist in the passages quoted above--a micro and a macro community--and both are seeking the same non-feudalistic ideal, but where the first stresses faith, the second stresses a consciousness of the past. Third, and finally, Odugo discovers himself alone; he reflects upon his three, equally independent-minded mistresses,and some of their resolve enters him:

> All this speculation about Gladys arose because Vic had left so abruptly, and Benne was trying so hard to be his new mistress, when she did not belong. No, best to dismiss thoughts of past love affairs and to concentrate on plans to visit [his wife and children] as soon as the roads were safer (83).[29]

Vic's sudden departure teaches Odugo that "the first lesson of survival [is to] always manoeuvre yourself close to the seat of power" (82, his stress). And Odugo soon leaves (93), taking the potential that Vic, Benne, Pa Ukoha and Captain offer, with him.

To what end does Odugo use the lessons he has learned? In his new resolve, he reaches Ifitenu and finds his sons and daughter in good health (95) but in the care of his sister-in law because his wife has left and is doing relief work. Odugo feels sure that there is more to his wife Juliette's actions than pure altruism, and his suspicions are confirmed when one of his sons lets slip that she is staying at "the Federal Army Barracks" (96). Immediate thoughts of Juliette are submerged by the more immediate need to find petrol and by the unexpected arrival of Gladys. Gladys is noticeable because of the energy and independence she embodies, in contrast to Odugo; she assists Odugo with practical suggestions, including a plan to keep the children safe (105). In his home town of Ogene, Gladys' surprise at Odugo is shared by the reader:

> So the war had given Ogene market a new importance. People were haggling aloud in Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba, and Ika-Ibo. This development in his home village was strange to Odugo's ears and rather satisfying. "One Nigeria!" Odugo cried...(107).

The cry, easily drawn from people's lips when soldiers and the scent of death are near, is presented here spontaneously and with feeling. Where Gladys is lively and hopeful in spite of her circumstances, Odugo only awakens to fully direct his life when positive change is experienced. The contrast of the phrase's ironic use in the past with its present use reveals Odugo's first glimpse of a restructured community; this community reflects back upon those envisaged by Pa Ukoha and Captain, a multi-cultural nation state.

The reader gains a similar insight into Odugo's nature when EKwensi sets up Odugo's brother Patrick as a comparison:

> Patrick's children were here in Ogene, but he himself had run away to Kotonou in Dahomey and had remained there throughout the war, to the embarrassment of all the family. They all knew him as a man who liked to keep his things separate from those of his brothers(114).

James Odugo stayed, committed himself to his work, placed his family farther from the war front than himself, and shared his supplies with his family. In contrast to Patrick, James has retained more of the communal values, although he still has some way to go to envision and to re-establish his role in the new order. To achieve this goal Odugo journeys to Enugu in search of his wife.

After settling Gladys into her family home, Odugo finds a place for himself. In a bar he learns that the federal government has made money available to "everyone in the service" (131), no matter which side (Federal or Biafran) they served. The consensus is that there are no victors and no vanquished; it is in John de St. Jorre's words "a brothers' war". The refrain of "One Nigeria" (i.e., a federalist one) so prevalent earlier in the text has given way to an equally empty one--in the mouths of most people--"happy survival". Many will fritter their money away in daily drunken binges; others will open new businesses; some will defraud their way to future riches (134), and armed bandits will kill for their future livelihood. Odugo almost piously stands out in his desire to re-establish himself as a journalist, for he seems to be reclaiming and rebuilding as his way of defining a "happy survival". Captain, however, sounds a warning note, for when Odugo introduces Gladys to him, Captain's response is " 'Welcome, lady, Odugo, you always have beautiful partners.' 'Life is short.' 'But you must begin to think of the new life' " (135, my stress).Captain sees that Odugo still, intermittently, thinks in terms of the war; that is, he provides for his immediate needs instead of looking to the future. The warning is underscored by Juliette's stance at their reunion.

Odugo's position is problematic, for he accuses Juliette of adultery and excuses himself of the same charge because he, by custom, is allowed several wives. Odugo conveniently forgets that none of the women he has taken were considered as potential wives at the time; to him, they were merely useful. Similarly, his invocation of Igbo custom for the return of the bride price (139) has a slight odour of profiteering about it. Juliette, the newly emancipated woman, in charge of relief supplies does not escape criticism either for she declares: "I'll take Ifoma because she is a girl, but she'll still answer your name. You may have the two boys" (140). She throws traditional social practices in Odugo's face and, in so doing denies the only unity left; she proposes dividing the family and then compounds the case against herself by forgetting to ask after her children's health and safety (142). Infected by the lure of personal power and advancement, Juliette casts a pall over all of the women, who, until now, have been presented primarily as figures of strength and sustenance. The irresolution of their differences is a warning about the distances between people beneath the facade of a happy survival.

Gladys remains with Odugo, accompanying him to Lagos. Both are well treated by Odugo's former boss, who asserts that he "could not see this war ending any other way than we should continue to be brothers" (149). Odugo's position seems assured;

he receives his back pay and leaves to return to Enugu, but not before he realizes that many television programs are new (149) and that construction has continued throughout the war (152). Those in the Western Nigerian cities who have not experienced the war have--through lack of involvement--sown the seeds of future wars. The "live now" formula of the city, seen to be prevalent in harsher forms elsewhere, has further tipped the scales, so that the East will spend less time reconstructing the social base of the community and more time playing economic catch up. Social programs will falter because money is not there:

> Enugu was the town where everyone was recovering property and selling, to obtain big cash with which to start off in business. Very few were to think of returning to work in the public sector--not permanently (153).

The terrible syntax used in this description is an unconscious deployment of style against social practice: a vulgar style reflects society's vulgarity. Odugo, having lost sight of his positive lessons, jumps on the bandwagon and decides to go into business for himself. To remain in the East will give him the opportunity to "take part in rebuilding something" (154, my stress), and in the private sector he "will have a free hand" (154). No longer on a quest for his self, his family, and a community to which he can contribute, Odugo seems to pull "back from social responsibility into selfish individualism [seeking] his share of "the national cake" (Nazareth, 169, his stress).

On his return to Pa Ukoha's compound, to pick up his property deeds, Odugo is shot by some armed robbers (171). A series of predictable closures then bring the story to an end. First, the roads are unsafe, so inter-village communication is put in jeopardy. Second, the bandits are from Pa Ukoha's village, so even the continuity of specific codes and traditions is at risk. The trust, faith, and morals of the older generation, nevertheless, are reaffirmed (174), as is the promise, through the reunion of Pa Ukoha's family (177) of the "new nation" (they are internationally educated). Rosemary Colmer summarizes the novel most succinctly perhaps when she writes:

> ...one is shown that family unity and national unity are far more important than the achievement of personal or tribal ambitions. [Hence,] Ekwensi's contention that the individual's attempts to realize selfish ambitions is ultimately destructive (Colmer, 52).

It is into this destructive climate--a version of Amadi's widening chasm between rich and poor--that Gladys and Odugo's daughter will be born. Her name, Nkiruk ("that which lies ahead is greater" (179)), offers some optimism for the future. But, as the people suffer from an awakened insomnia, from which Omotoso tried to wrest them, it seems that Ekwensi forces upon the people's "grandchildren and those yet unborn" the task of rebuilding and the duty "to carry on" (Colmer, 52). The conclusion is pessimistic because unlike Omotoso's satire, Ekwensi's reportage style of realism merely leaves things as they are. There is no attempt at change even through tone.

Little in Ekwensi's style or thematic choices relates to the decolonizers' theories. In fact, Ekwensi's acute sense of the newsworthy nature of public events[30] has been the only apparent "theory" he has used to become a writer with mass appeal. Ekwensi has commented upon his position as a popular writer ("true artist") in the following way:

> [I] look for life in its sordidness or life at its most glorious: true life still has its own particular fascination...if you want true life you must go down to the people and that is what I always do in my novels (Quoted in Duerden and Pieterse, 78).

One recoils from the apparent condescension of the phrase "go down to the people," with its implicit stance of moral and intellectual superiority. Ekwensi has made an unconscious slip here, for he tells us elsewhere that he does not regard himself "as one of the sacred writers, writing for some audience locked up in the higher seats of learning" (Dem-Say, 28). Moreover, he has also declared: "I write for both [an international and a national audience], I am a writer. I think I am a writer who regards himself a writer for the masses" (Quoted in Duerden and Pieterse, 79). The decolonizers and Omotoso could learn much from Ekwensi's modest claims because his neutrality, his desire not to teach but to show makes him one of Nigeria's most popular writers. He, in turn, could learn from them, for the plotting of Survive the Peace, and to a greater degree Divided We Stand, is at times infuriating and confusing. Similarly, from the examples of his writing quoted above, Ekwensi's syntax could stand improvement. These points, when taken into account, could reverse Eustace Palmer's eurocentric, but valid claim that Ekwensi "has no place in a critical work devoted to the masters of African fiction...."[31] Improvement of syntax, then structure, and plot would increase Ekwensi's reputation, while simultaneously educating his audience so that it can grow with him.

Omotoso's satire may work on a superficial level, for it is grotesque and quick-witted enough to provoke responses from all elements within the community. The nature, the strength and the direction of the response, unfortunately, is left completely open. If the populist community is awakened, then where is it headed? Incitement to action without the proposal of a communal course, some form of end, is an easy route out for the novelist because commitment need be nothing more than a nebulous "process of levelling up," in which "the richer should become poorer and the poorer richer" (Quoted in Balogun, 99). Ekwensi poses the harder, more demanding contingency of endurance. In a rare, non-fictional foray into prophecy, Ekwensi posits an evolutionary multiculturalism:

> ...after [each] external threat...there will be a new stage of unity and so on until you reach the ultimate when you cannot go back to the original fragments that made the nation (Quoted in Granqvist, 125).

Awake! Be disgusted! Act! These are Omotoso's orders to the masses: a directionless appeal for a response now. Learn, judge, pace yourself, endure: that is Ekwensi's more experientially but not artfully portrayed suggestion.

Biafran writers are committed to the revolutionary struggle of the people for justice and true independence.

-- Chinua Achebe,
"The African Writer
and the Biafran Cause,"
Morning Yet on Creation Day
1975: (London, Ibadan and Nairobi:
Heinemann, 1981) 84.

Fellow countrymen.... Let us admit to ourselves that when we left Nigeria, some of us did not shake off every particle of Nigerianism.

-- General C.Odumegwu Ojukwu,
Principles of the Biafran Revolution
(Cambridge, Mass. The Biafra
Review, 1969) 14.

Chapter Two

The War Within Biafra: Communal Schisms in S. O. Mezu's Behind the Rising Sun and I. N. C. Aniebo's The Anonymity of Sacrifice

The Nigerian Civil War fiction discussed in Chapter One underscores Amadi's sense of a social cleavage centred on the increasing disparity in income and social position in Nigeria. Biafra , as Mezu and Aniebo's works attest, suffers from the retention of Nigeria's hierarchical social order. The retained system offers both writers the material and the opportunity to explore their protagonists; they can then be "critical or even antagonistic"[1] to the values their characters' roles entail.

Georg Lukacs' analysis of national development in Germany, illuminates the Nigerian-Biafran conflict. Reasons for Biafra's rapid formation and its collapse arise, by analogy with the German experience, in Lukacs' discussion. National development in Germany, he writes,

> was marked by the inability of the German people to combine themselves into a modern nation, and so a kind of schism arose in the internal emotional life of the authentic German, who found himself still involved in the old reality. If his reason led him to understand

> that the old reality had become impossible, he still could not find any politically viable solution.[2]

Biafra was declared an independent republic by Colonel Ojukwu on the 30th of May 1967[3], as a final response to the unsatisfactory handling of atrocities committed against Easterners by General Gowon's federal government. Indeed, Ojukwu's decision was the only "politically viable solution" to the genocidal tendencies of the Northerners. The schisms within the federation prompted the mid-war declaration that Nigeria could not "BE CONSIDERED AN AFRICAN NECESSITY."[4] Nigeria was an inauthentic construct because African nationalism had played no part in its initial creation. Ojukwu played no part in either the 15 January 1966 or the 28 July 1966 *coup d'etats*. He was a legally appointed military governor of the Eastern region, and he had the full support of the East's 335 member Consultative Assembly of Chiefs and Elders in his decision to secede (Forsyth, 97); in this sense it was authentically African and Biafran. Ojukwu acted because his people's lives were at risk--there had been mass killings of Igbos in the Northern region during the summer and autumn of 1966, following the Northern inspired *coup* that brought Gowon to power (Forsyth, 73ff).

Attempts at negotiating a non-tribally based society in

Nigeria had failed because Gowon had not implemented the agreement reached at the Aburi, Ghana civil "peace" negotiations. In fact, Gowon's position changed several times because the Northerners seemed unsure of what their plans were. Initially the July coup was designed as a response to what was popularly believed to have been an Igbo (Eastern) managed coup in January. Later, the Northern plotters saw their violent change of government as a means to Northern secession:

> As soon as Lieutenant-Colonel Gowon set up base at Ikeja barracks a strange flag was seen flying from the main gate, and it remained there for eighteen days. It had lateral red, yellow, black, green and khaki stripes. It was the flag of the Republic of Northern Nigeria (Forsyth, 58-9).

Still later, with Northerners firmly entrenched in power, Gowon decided to rule Nigeria.

Power hungry, with an unhealthy distaste for the industrious Easterners, Northern military and political leaders sought complete control of the country, its wealth and its opportunities. Deprived of these, and molested after their return to the Igbo heartland, the Eastern people finally decided to fight back. The decision to secede, an authentically Biafran act, became rooted in collective social action against Nigerianisms, which Ojukwu defined in his statement that "Nigeria persecuted and slaughtered her minorities; Nigerian justice was a farce; her elections, her politics--her everything--was corrupt" (12). A new reality had dawned, but would its defining sense, its opposition to Northern ruled Nigeria, prove politically viable? The novels of S.O. Mezu and I.N.C. Aniebo document areas of this fight, whilst embodying something more: the schisms within the East, which confound Ojukwu's declaration of a people's revolution, wherein "THE PEOPLE ARE THE MASTER; THE LEADER IS THE SERVANT" (14). The protagonists of Mezu's Behind the Rising Sun (1971) and Aniebo's The Anonymity of Sacrifice (1974) are "authentic" Biafrans caught up in "the old reality" of Nigeria's hierarchial social order, even though they have seemingly been released from it into the new social reality of Biafra. None of the protagonists is able to "find any politically viable solution," within the new social context to the problems of hierarchial opportunism. Mezu and Aniebo, through the travails of their protagonists, reveal the reasons for Biafra's demise in her gestative period.

Lukacs elucidates the relationship between the individual and the state further when he says,

> ...there are movable limits involved [in our perspective on truth], for on the one hand understanding is in a position to establish certain things for the whole of human society. ... while on the other hand every man is involved in social struggles with his whole personality, so that acceptance or denial of any one statement is potentially class-determined (Lukacs, 43).

Consensus for some form of "objective" truth may be reached, but there is also the ever present possibility of subjectivity--individual bias--in the approach adopted. The Nigerian critic Chidi Amuta believes, along Lukacsian lines, that Mezu and Aniebo offer protagonists who belong to "a loosely defined bourgeoisie" (Amuta, 61). Developing this line of argument further, Amuta asserts that these two "novelists. . . are unconsciously mediating their own class roles . . . " (61). Thus, the context of the authors's social environment, unbeknown to the author, imposes a shape upon the text itself. However, the protagonists

> in being mediations of the world view of their creators . . . do not affirm the values of that world view but instead are cast in roles that are ultimately critical or even antagonistic to those values (Amuta, 61).

Characters consciously selected are deposited within the framework of the writer's own social vision to participate, in the form of record keeping or questioning thereby invoking a modified, changed, or annulled world-view. The extent to which Mezu and Aniebo involve themselves in this form of critical realism, relative to social vision, is central to our discussion of their novels. Do they cut across ethnic, professional, and national affiliations to produce a revised communal vision that has validity, in Lukacs' words, "for the whole of human society?"

The essay "Poetry and Revolution in Modern Africa" is a useful introduction to Mezu's aesthetics. A short, self-contained passage, authoritative in voice and succinct in expression, summarizes its essence:

> It is true that we should write about the sufferings under the colonial government, the humiliation of our brothers in South Africa, and the continuing struggle by black people in America. The African poet may justifiably write about these events he feels and senses but he must do something more. His writing must be something positive, with a positive message and not a

> cultural apology in the guise of poetry.[5]

The poet must write about directly felt experience, whether it is his/her own or that of the projected audience, and the resultant work must express only the best attributes ("positive") of experience; in short, Mezu calls for critical realism.

Behind the Rising Sun opens not with the objectivity critical realism embodies, but with a statement which emphasizes the subjective nature of authorial intent: the dedication is a partisan statement, whereas the novel's title and the epigraph promise objectivity.[6] Mezu wishes to identify himself as a Biafran to better assert the objectivity that he can bring to any account of his people's affairs during the war. He will offer an omniscient "free-floating consciousness" (Lukacs, 42) who "has chosen to speak for [his people] on the contemporary scene" (Mezu, 1973, 96). Again, Lukacs locates the difficulty of attaining such a perspective:

> ...man is first and foremost, like every organism, a being that responds to his environment... In other words, man reconstructs the problems arising from his real existence as questions, and then responds to them; there is no such thing at all as a free-floating consciousness [Mezu's impartial objective "witness"],

existing on its own basis...(Lukacs, 42).

Mezu cannot depict a character who merely describes events; the descriptions will move in a pre-determined way, revealing authorial bias as situations are responded to.

Mezu emphasizes the route he wishes to take in the choice of name for his protagonist, Freddie Onuoha, whose surname embodies a sense of community: "Oha in their language meant community."[7] It depicts all aspects of the Biafran community seen through the eyes of this everyman. Onuoha first appears in the novel at a meeting of Biafra's Paris delegation, a group whose function is to acquire arms and supplies for their fledgling state. Mezu foregrounds Onuoha almost immediately by listing him in the catalogue of the group's membership, but also by setting him apart: he "raised a few objections about the contract" (Behind the Rising Sun, 2) for aircraft and arms. The group's leader, Obiara Ifedi, may brush aside Onuoha's objections, but they have made their impact: Onuoha is no passive witness; he is an active participant, with an independent mind. The degree of Onuoha's independence and involvement, in addition to his effectiveness, will help us to assess Mezu's biases, and thus his (re)vision of the state.

Juxtaposing Onuoha with other members of the Paris delegation is Mezu's first tactic to achieve the reader's support and sympathies. A few examples will illustrate this point more forcefully. Negotiations with the charter flight operator, Kutzenov, are stillborn, so Ifedi decides that they must be "called off" (7). Kutzenov, true to his caricature of the nefarious capitalist, demands compensation in addition to the retainer he has already received; Ifedi is willing to pay. Onuoha, on the other hand, "suspected that [Kutzenov] had [no] aircraft to his name" (7). Onuoha suspects, but does not voice his opinion here, much in the same way that Ekwensi's Odugo knew his broadcasts were lies, but kept producing them. A similar contrast is found in Ifedi and Onuoha's reactions to the Prague arms deal, where a lack of receipts and inspection of the "purchase" cause Ifedi and the group little concern; whereas, "some members of the squad, in particular Jeff Edu and Freddie Ohnuoha, now began to wonder if Prague really did exist" (10). Mezu mechanically (through the repetition of phrases like "in particular") separates Onuoha from the "squad" (a negatively loaded term in itself) and thus builds an individualized character simply--simply, for Onuoha's opposition is restricted to wondering, or accepting rebuttals of his criticism.

Mezu is making two points implicitly here. First, Onuoha's inability to criticize openly emphasises his possession of a less powerful (i.e., subservient) position within the hierarchy.

Second, a lack of resolve in Onuoha is brought to the surface: the moment may not be an opportune one to combat his superiors, but Onuoha never does.

Onuoha may not speak out forcefully enough, but we tentatively identify with him; there is no one else. To ensure the persistence of Onuoha's pseudo-heroic status, Mezu continues to draw contrasts with the squad: when the squad find difficulty pronouncing their clients' names (6), Onuoha's knowledge of French will assist them (16). The squad's ways are superficial and self-centred, akin to the threats of Araba from Northern Nigerian and the profligacy of Nigerian businessmen in general; separated, but still mindful of his place, Onuoha's useful and contrasting nature offers an as yet unrealized potential.

Mezu now moves to reconstruct Onuoha's past, in a swift, descriptive narration of events, to illustrate Onuoha's commitment to Biafra. Six to eight years of study overseas, followed by work in the "Biafra Historical Research Centre" (19) in Paris, until the declaration of war reveals an 'exiled' Onuoha whose ties to a specific culture are vague, peripheral. What Onuoha studied is of no consequence; his studies are therefore of no consequence. Only Onuoha's ties to his nation's cultural institute before the declaration of war are important, for they emphasize his interest in Igbo culture and traditions. The outbreak of war has Onuoha kneel and pray for "peace", as Jeff Edu is doing (19), but with that option effectively closed, he wishes to return to Biafra, inspired to do so by Professor Nwoke's decision. Nwoke, however, orders Onuoha and Edu "to stay in Paris, for they would have very important missions to fulfill abroad...their experience would be very handy..." (21). A problem persists throughout this narrative passage because Onuoha, chameleon-like, responds to the actions of others, but initiates little. It is the mark of a communal failing (in Biafra), unintended by Mezu because community is what Onuoha means and comes to represent as a model (229), even if the model is, as yet, unstructured and vacillating.

Just as problematic is the fact that Professor Nwoke departs. Nwoke's qualifications are more suited to an overseas job than are Onuoha's, due to the power at his disposal: he can command others (21). Mezu fails to make use of this point, thereby opening the narrative to criticism, but successfully engineering his witness' continued presence in Paris to observe the inter-Biafran power plays. Of no less import is the description of Nwoke: a "calm", "intelligent" man who "spoke French...and had an exceptionally sharp mind," and who was "courageous", "magnanimous" and "austere" (21). This uncritically idealistic description will remain present in the reader's mind when Nwoke is off-stage, and will be attributed to those associated with him: Edu and Onuoha. It is character building by association, an extension and inversion of the earlier character building by contrast: an obvious but effective structural ploy.[9]

Onuoha's silence and inaction betray his impotence and ineffectuality. He is not, however, alone in this position, for the pre-war hierarchy of Nigeria prevails in Biafra. The "squad" (Ifedi, Obelenwata, Iweka, Afoukwa) "flew [by plane as well as in fear] out of the country to defend overseas the young Republic whose existence was threatened militarily at home" (22). Their actions are a severe indictment of them that once more throws a positive light on Onuoha, whose desire to return to Biafra aligns him with other idealistic youths whom the squad vilify: "Lawyer Afoukwa maintained strongly that the army boys and young scientists were unworthy to live" in his houses in Biafra (23). Status, money, position and safety are the explicit characteristics of the squad; while youthful idealism is the implicit nature of Onuoha.

Like his colleagues in Biafra, Onuoha sees some of the roads to change; nevertheless, his (and their) adherence to the old system of values and code of conduct, relative to their superiors, produces a pathetically impotent picture: he must simply take a glass of water while the members of the squad gorge themselves on Parisian desserts, and the people of Enugu prepare to die (24).

Onuoha's sacrifice is minimal, an unnoticed protest, which Juliet Okonkwo has summarized thus:

> Mezu relates [the squad's] activities to the fighting on the battlefield, and showns [sic] clearly how, at very strategic moments, it is to the co-ordinated efforts of these background performers that Biafran losses are attributable,[10]

Onuoha is part of the co-ordinated effort because of his silence. He is ignored by the squad just as the young professors and officers were when they produced a study on the procurement and transportation of arms. The younger generation's work was diverted from its partisan intent, and is appropriated to selfish ends:

> ...not a word had been heard about [their study] again. Later on, news filtered out that, faithful to the principle of free enterprise, a group of leading businessmen had obtained the monopoly for operating the shipping and air freight companies. The Board of Directors...included Obiora Ifedi...(25).

The hegemony of the old guard continues unabated. A small group commandeers the tools to be used for a larger, more open society. Visions of equality are usurped.

Lukacs and Amuta are correct in their theoretical and interpretive assessments: Onuoha, firmly entrenched in the order of an earlier communal structure, appears very much the bourgeois man,[11] criticism of him is a criticism of the greater Biafran community. The obvious option to his role's impotence would seem to be involvement with the revolutionary middle-class: those like Nzeogwu (leader of the January 16th 1966 _coup_) who would not falter when some bloody steps were needed to overthrow the old hierarchy.

Onuoha becomes practically involved, but his commitment to Biafra is seriously compromised by a willingness to perpetuate the _status quo_--a hierarchial system. He is involved in making "the necessary arrangements" for storing equipment that will pass through Paris (39); he also wishes to see for himself the planes that Lavignette and Fresco are selling. All that Onuoha does, however, is centred within the old structures, so he assists in perpetuating them, and has no control over the outcome of events: the explosives and other supplies eventually are put on a Lavignette and Fresco plane that requires repairs; another of the planes crashes, and yet another passes over Biafra without landing.[12] Where Onuoha shows greater, if restricted engagement, the squad, and in particular Professor Obelenwata "refused to append his name on the document", for the purchase of an aeroplane, "even as a witness" (37). Impotent to get supplies moving to Biafra because of the squad's incompetence, Onuoha is engaged, at least, as a passive witness of this period of Biafran history. He does not escape uncriticized when his statement of social vision (which he shares with Jeff Edu and Dr. Okeji) is taken into account: "a new state, a new generation of people, strong and united in a common struggle for the good of all" (39).[13] It is an empty rhetorical and fanciful vision in view of the fact that he is presently involved with neither a "new generation" nor in a "common struggle for the good of all." There are shades of James Odugo's failure at the end of Survive the Peace here.

Mezu rarely shows Onuoha brooding over difficulties or, indeed, the future. Onuoha, as we saw earlier, reacted to, assimilated, and appropriated the ideas of others. His vision of society, too, comes directly from others:

> When Onuoha finished his letter, Dr. Okeji and Jeff Edu were still at their conversation. 'I am in a way happy,' Edu said...'that our government did not score a four-day victory as they hoped they would. Such a

> victory would have heralded the greatest tyranny in the history of our people, because the politicians advising or running the government once they had won the war without the people would also have ruled without the people...'
>
> 'As I was saying before' Dr. Okeji added, 'having mobilized the people when they realized that they could not win this quick victory, having politicized them to this extent...they have forged, they believe, a new generation that would save them from defeat, that would uphold their banner, but in actual fact they have sown the seeds of their own destruction' (44, my stress).

The ideas expressed here are noteworthy because Mezu's characters appear to be moving outward to the masses from their own class perspective. Onuoha, disturbingly, is little more than a passive recipient of these views.[14] Moreover, Okeji's "As I was saying before..." speech dismisses Edu's contribution off-handedly, stressing a hierarchy in the discussion. It is therefore easy to see the irony implicit in the conclusion: "they have sown the seeds of their own destruction...." The ruling class have no need to fear because the perpetuation of hierarchy in the bourgeoisie contributes to the latter's ineffectiveness.

This interpretation of the bourgeois nature of the new Biafran society is inadvertently exposed in Okeji's manifesto:

> 'You need a leader courageous enough to stand firm for justice and to stamp out inequity, a leader sensitive enough to feel the pulse of the people as he guides them with his creative imagination. You need such a leader for the unleashed power to be channelled into scientific progress, human happiness and peaceful prosperity' (44).

Such a programme would produce a patriarchal not an egalitarian society, one ruled by a benevolent dictatorship, with stress on middle class values--a return to the nineteenth century and a world of happiness and prosperity.[15]

Onuoha is made into a middle rank representative with no power: he is a median (of varying quality) between the sheer exploitation of business and political interests and Nzeogwu's people's revolution. Onuoha offers promise of something more than the status quo but not much more, in view of the fact that he is a member of the middle class readjusting to a war that "had overtaken them by surprise" (19). His contribution is our consciousness of his ineffectiveness.

Only in Mezu's summary of the war's events to date is Onuoha shown "brooding over...thoughts" (92) of politicians enriching themselves from the war, living in neutral territories, their children at boarding schools abroad, while "the peasants" and "the sons of peasants" (91) work and bleed to support (often under pressure) the war's continuance. Onuoha's "disgust" (92) with the politicians and his pity for the peasants invokes an image of the benevolent bourgeoisie as the saviour of the future. However, Onuoha's continued negotiation work, in addition to the absence of himself as a part of the problem, does not bode well for the future.

Ineffective in Paris, Onuoha sets out for Biafra, where his "usefulness"may be extended. At the time of his departure, Paris is in the midst of the 1968 student demonstrations, which Onuoha connects to Nigeria's war. Reflecting on both situations, he draws the same conclusion:

> A few little concessions could have saved the nation from its seemingly impending demise. A little bit of humility, personal, corporate and ideological could have saved the nation (104).

But there are no concessions in Paris or in Nigeria. Power is retained and preserved, not shared among the diverse groups.

Onuoha does not dwell on the comparison further; instead, a dismissive, fatalistic attitude emerges: "The fact was that a war there was and questions about its inevitability were pointless, futile" (105). It is a typical example of middle class pragmatism: what's done is done; it is what can be done now that is of the essence. The difficulties with such views are manifold, mainly because there is no continuity in thought, and thus no real plan.[16]

In Senegal, Onuoha assists the Biafran girl, Titi, and thus swells the ranks of his oha to two.[17] They fly to Biafra, but cannot land there, so their relationship has time to develop during their enforced stopover in Sao Tomé. Both Mezu and Onuoha's interest in the war wanes significantly: Onuoha and Titi breakfast together, tour the city of Libreville, and lunch in a Chinese restaurant:

> The Chinese seem to carry their restaurants and their food to the remotest corners of the world: they seem to be everywhere. That afternoon Onuoha and Titi arrived as the man was roasting a fat pig in the open air. The Chinese man also did about four or five other jobs...Titi enjoyed the meal. The Chinese are generally good cooks. It seems that there is something they put

> in their soups and dishes that makes people want to come again. After a while, it becomes a habit and whenever the initiated person goes to any city, the first thing he asks is where to find a Chinese restaurant. And there always seems to be one around the corner (140).

What is happening here? Mezu, in the act of writing this piece, and Onuoha, in the act of eating, detach themselves from serious concerns and become animated over trifles: an emphasis on one's worldliness[18] is a form of escapism. Mezu's lack of commitment to his narrative usurps Onuoha's role and raises the spectre of indulgent self-interest. To compensate for this failure, Mezu once more reverts to the use of a foil to recover Onuoha's reputation. Lawyer Afoukwa reneges on his promise to enter Biafra with Onuoha and Titi, in a superficial and sickeningly self-glorifying speech: "The world knows nothing of these experiences: I should like to bring them to the knowledge of the world as soon as possible" (142).[19] In contrast, our estimation of Onuoha and Titi is raised.[20]

Once in Biafra, Onuoha questions others about what has happened, relying on hearsay to create a complete picture. From this point forth, Mezu, too, utilizes the worst stories to create pro-Biafran sympathy, thus sowing the seeds early for his insular vision of society at the novel's close. For instance, Mezu reinforces our sympathetic feelings for the Igbo through the creation of stereotypical Nigerian troops and their actions. The fall of Port-Harcourt "was a massacre" (155); stories about it "were atrocious;" some of them "should not be repeated before the coming generation" (155)--otherwise they would be stillborn because of the inherited prejudices (i.e., they would resemble the old generation)--but the stories are retold in graphic detail. Yet again: "It is needless to repeat such stories" (155), but in saying so Mezu reinforces those with which he provides us. The final image is one of "castrated" (155) Igbos, some of whom "were still lucky enough to have a village to which they could return" (156). The impotence of the average Biafran is emphasized, but in relation to the ill brought forth by Nigerians, not the old guard who corruptly (mis)control Biafran affairs. The novel has twisted from its earlier course of inter-Biafran criticism for all Biafrans are now united against their external enemy.

This anti-Nigerian edge to the narrative continues in the significantly titled chapter 8 ("Behind Enemy Lines"); no longer is the enemy found within, or in the international arena. The chapter offers repetition of "Nigerian"--a descriptive term that underlines the otherness of non-Biafrans.[21] Once out of Biafran held territory everything "appeared to have been reversed" (169).

Biafra is natural; Nigeria is made into a Macbeth inspired hell. Biafrans who are brought back to Biafra emphasize the devolutionary, savage nature of Nigeria(ns): "Like a child, they had to be initiated again into the mysteries of food and water, bit by bit, drop by drop." (169).

With the Nigerian systematically set up as other and Nigerian territory related to a savage wilderness, Mezu strikes his final blow at the federation. Nigerian soldiers sing the national anthem, with Mezu adding these comments:

> For years, the national flag had been hanging at half mast...stained with...blood...The army defenders of justice...turned the entire nation into a human abattoir ... The nation separated into tribal cliques, new brotherhoods were being formed to divide and slaughter. It was difficult to see in such a land a fatherland. It was more of a murderland. (192).

The anthem may be for all Nigerians, but they are the enemy, they sing the anthem and the commentary is appended to them. Identity for the Biafran is irrevocably tied to the self, to the home, for, "once behind enemy lines, one's identity becomes lost in the land of refugees" (193): the homeless.

Unsurprisingly, the last chapter, "Behind the Rising Sun", offers the vision of a future Igbo/Biafran centred community. Problems of hierarchy are unresolved from earlier portions of the text; the historical reality of Biafra's defeat is ignored; Onuoha, for whom the new village of Umuoha is named, never resolved the problems of commitment. But what of it? The problem is that Mezu bases his propaganda for a Biafran inspired nation on false grounds; the surpluses (234), "newfound joy" and "communalistic flag" (235) are empty words depicting a hoped for but lost dream. As Juliet I. Okonkwo has remarked,

> The abrupt ending of the novel on an optimistic note betrays Mezu's impatience with the ugly past and anxiety that something worthwhile come out of the destruction of the past (Okonkwo, 168).

It is Mezu's misfortune that he produces pro-Biafran propaganda at a time when all ethnic groups should have stressed reconciliation and attacked the problems of class. In the last analysis, Mezu has produced "[a] cultural apology in the guise" of "a positive message . . ." (Mezu, 1973, 105):[22] he affirms his own world view, and in doing so stifles Onuoha's potential to fully perform a critique of his class, through his actions.[23] Ending on a falsely heroic note, the critical function Onuoha performs early in the text is undercut. Mezu thus undermines his ideal community's commanding tenet: "We owe it as a duty to tell our children nothing but the truth, the entire truth" (214). Once again, the views of Lukacs, though on another topic, are relevant to Mezu's artistic failure:

> ...the logical conclusion of all this is that humanism is mocked as not in conformity with experience, with the "really valuable," with the "special nature of the inner man." Thus humanism prevails externally [i.e., as the novel's explicit intent], but the other attitude [the author's social struggles] in a subtle way prevails internally [implicitly] (Koffler in Pinkus, 45).

I. N. C. Aniebo is an Igbo who served in the Nigerian military, attained the rank of major in 1965, and shortly thereafter resigned from his post to assume a commission in the Biafran forces.[24] Fighting on the front-lines, Aniebo personally experienced much of the soldiers' war that he relates in *The Anonymity [illegible] [illegible]crifice*, "A Hero's Welcome" and "In the Front Line."[25] In these respects Aniebo is in a better position to supply information about the feelings and opinions of Biafran troops than S.O. Mezu, whose description of the front lines is cursory at best. The soldier-cum-novelist offers greater objectivity than his civilian counterpart (Mezu). While describing the difficulties of hierarchy and class through his protagonists--Captain Benjy Onwura and Sergeant Cyril Agumo--Aniebo quite clearly has one eye on the past and the other on the future. The explicit depiction of flaws in Biafra's organizational structure--here, in the intensified focus that a military hierarchy provides--which contributed to the nation's demise are of historical interest, while the social conflicts arising from historical situations are implicitly presented as problems that a now reunited Nigeria must overcome. This is an inversion of Mezu's process of looking back to create what might have been, for Aniebo looks back to illuminate problems that society faces in the present. Thus, where Mezu jumped from critical realism to a fallacious idealism, Aneibo appears to be grounded in _ratio_ at all times.

Juliet I. Okonkwo has written of _The Anonymity of Sacrifice_ that:

> The best thing in the novel is the excellent character portrayal of the major protagonists. That this is

> Aniebo's main concern is shown in the titles which he has given to his different chapters, which alternate between "Captain Benjy Onwurah" [sic] and "Sergeant Cyril Agumo"--The [sic] soldiers whose individuality, to outsiders is usually effaced by the severe sameness of their khaki uniforms, assume in this novel their differentiated personalities, exhibiting fear, nervousness, bravery and callousness just like human beings around them. (173).

Okonkwo's views may be used to open the narrative further, in that the idea of uniforms and the sense of uniformity lay stress on an incomplete analogy with community. "Uniform" depicts the loss of self within the communal identity, whether national or tribal, as much as it illustrates the loss of individuality within an armed force: in both cases the individual gives way to a collective will, which Aniebo reveals as a false reality because there is as yet no foundation for it in Nigeria or Biafra.

Related to and bearing much in common with the idea of uniforms is Aniebo's use of chapter headings. These offer more than mere signposts to which character's consciousness "controls" the narrative at given points.[26] The distinction is in rank (hierarchy) as well as in name (self): a stress on individuality thus invokes liberal attitudes, whereas rank offers the perspective of a controlled class consciousness (i.e., the relationships among different levels within the hierarchy).

Aniebo was an officer; so one may reasonably expect a narrative which leans in support of Captain Onwura's personality and class: because, in R.D. Laing's words, "Our behaviour is a function of our experience. We act according to the way we see things." Moreover, Lukacs adds that

> Every writer is the son of his age. The contradictory tendencies of the age...affect the writer in a contradictory and criss-cross fashion...it is very difficult for the writer to really free himself from the currents and fluctuations of his time and, within them, from those of his class.[27]

Both statements may be put to profitable use in an examination of character and characterization in Aniebo's novel; the examination will show the extent to which Aniebo and his protagonists transcend such rigid theoretical structures by revealing any bias inherent in the presentation, as well as in the social vision that emerges.

From the outset it should be stressed that Aniebo's structure emphasizes the presence of a dialogue, where the "forces of destruction on the outside [i.e., Nigeria] are matched by the forces of self-destruction within" (Feuser, 139) the men and their community. This approach, which stands in contrast to Ekwensi and Mezu's monologues and Omotoso's highly limited dialogue, offers the potential for serious growth away from the writer's original social vision: the oppositional nature of the text, if the writer takes his task seriously, will expand his own thoughts. This latter point is underscored by Aniebo in his choice of epigraph by Dag Hammarskjold (the former U. N. Secretary General who Aniebo served while in Katanga), wherein the last line, "The sacrificial act and the sacrificial victim are opposites, and to be judged as such," emphasizes the need for rational thought developed from diverse perspectives. The shooting of Onwura by Agumo, and Agumo's death at the hands of a firing squad are poignant sacrifices because of their analogous meaning to nation states. An examination of these acts will offer a perspective on Aniebo and his communal (re)vision.[28]

The novel's time span is a brief three days: the projected period that will pass between Captain Onwura's two visits to his fiancee, Franca. Structurally, this approach gives the reader a manageable entry into the novel by including interest in one of the protagonist's personal lives. Arguably, however, Aniebo usurps the dialogue because the opening chapters are centred on Onwura; there is no interaction, no change in perspective until Agumo and Onwura are brought together much later. The dice are not loaded in Onwura's favour, however, because Agumo's character is further developed after he kills Onwura, in Part Five, the Epilogue. Beginnings and endings, then, are used to depict man alone, vying for understanding and control of his life, without the intrusions or demands of others.

The crucial incident in the novel is unexpected. Agumo has disobeyed Onwura's order to retreat, which results in a confrontation between them at the command post. At first, the narrative is close to Onwura; a certain tautness and authority reflect this fact. Agumo is expected to submit to this authority, but he"...pulled out his pistol, cocking it in the same movement, and before his commander could cock his rifle, fired three shots in quick succession" (101), killing Onwura. Agumo is not reacting to an equal with whom there can be debate: "his commander" expects the hierarchial rules which designated his power to have an effect. They do not, and so the narrative perspective we have occupied, identifying with Onwura's sense of order, is overturned.

Aniebo repeats the scene from Agumo's perspective. It is of note that Agumo is called "Local Second Lieutenant", a promotion bestowed on him by Onwura for being "the most capable" (87) member of the company to assume command, and as such Agumo believes that he carries somewhat more power and authority than he hitherto had done:

> Once again fear took flight inside Cyril, but it was followed closely by elation. "So that's how it is," he thought, as he adopted the cowboy stance he had admired so much in films. "Well let's see who draws first" (104).

Untrained and uninitiated in the ways of officers, Agumo reverts to popular culture as a means of managing the situation. Consequently, this pathetic little scene of good guy and bad guy being decided by the speed with which he can retrieve his pistol and kill Onwura enters his consciousness. It does not audibly enter the void between himself and Onwura though because it is just a thought. According to Willfried Feuser, the novel's dominant theme is "the old conflict between reason and passion, tolerance and blind belief" (139). From the foregoing scene, Agumo may be viewed as a man of "passion" and "blind belief", who acts accordingly. So too may Onwura be realized in the formula of "reason" and "tolerance". Nevertheless, these are only the superficial influences that motivate these men; behind each term lies an environmental determiner, an ideology of sorts, that is also part of the conflict.

With this notion of ideology in mind, the texture and depth of the novel are enhanced in the reading of each scene. Agumo believes he has offered a fair fight, even though he has not communicated this fact orally. Onwura notices only "the hostile stance, and the grenades and the pistol," seeing Agumo as a "dangerous character to be handled carefully"--a rationalization that is correct because "his brain warned" him. (99). Agumo soaks up sensations and responds to them whereas, Onwura reacts logically to empirical data. Neither protagonist has any idea of the ideological gulf that separates them; they only know that there is a difference.

Onwura adheres to the world of military rules, in an attempt to reinforce his ideology's dominance, and demands a salute from Agumo. The salute given, Onwura retreats from "danger"--the periphery of his world view--to a "gentlemanly", if "more severe tone" (110). Apparently, he believes the hierarchy re-established, so that control returns to him. Agumo, however, has continued to respond on a liminal level: his salute is nonchalant; his responses are sullen (100). Thus, Onwura's real authority remains undermined; Agumo's reactions are in form only because the meaning (commitment to military principles) behind them is gone. We are in the midst of a power play, albeit one that neither participant is fully conscious of, for validation of a social vision (limited as it is to the way in which the front lines will be organized).

Onwura has lost authority because Agumo fulfilled his role when he repulsed an enemy attack (96), whereas Onwura has been unable to fulfil his intermediary role--he has been unable to produce a plentiful supply of armed reinforcements, and retreats have repeatedly been signalled. In both situations Onwura has failed to explain his needs satisfactorily, to his superiors, or the lack of support adequately, to his juniors. Onwura requests reinforcements for his company commanders, but those at a higher level in the hierarchy do not respond immediately. Agumo repulses an attack, but Onwura realizes that Agumo and his men will be cut-off from supplies and support because the companies on either flank of Agumo have been pushed back. Thus, Onwura's position is in the middle, with demands pressing upon him from the other two levels of the hierarchy. His position gives him a more complete view than Agumo's does, and he holds to it because he can think in the abstract (i.e., in terms of things not directly seen or experienced). Agumo, thinking literally, responds to actualities, not probabilities. Onwura's perspective repeats the narrative in the irritating "You didn't follow orders," "Yes I did," "No you didn't" scenario that brings Onwura close to striking Agumo for his perceived obtuseness and insolence (100). To strike Agumo would place Onwura within the same emotional and physical ideological plane as Agumo, and to do so would increase the potential for greater understanding: Agumo's respect for Onwura would increase because of the physical challenge. However Onwura remains governed by the laws of the existing system which deems it wrong "to strike a junior no matter what the provocation" (100). Junior and senior, hierarchial terms, also signify--for Onwura--a complete code of conduct which permits the perpetuation of the communal whole.

In contrast, Agumo's code is centered on the perpetuation of self: an aggressively physical code of beast-like survival that knows only direct experience. Thus, as a commander of men, Agumo fails to adopt or appropriate the ideology behind his new role; he quite simply extends his initial idealogy to accept new circumstances as they are met.[29] For instance, when his men threaten to retreat, Agumo reacts with violence--an effective but short-lived means of retaining support for the system: "...he swivelled the gun to his right where he could see most of his deserting men, and opened fire, cutting down those at the head" (95). More informatively, we discover Cyril's violence as a common feature, used to retain control and respect. A corporal is caught laughing at him, so "Cyril, too angry to think, turned back to the corporal and...shot him dead" (92). With his wife, who has slept with others, Agumo, before he "could think twice about it[,] had slapped her" (27). Agumo utilizes his physical prowess, while his uncontrolled emotions use him, and the result is brutally efficient; the second killings merely reinforce and validate Agumo's newfound sense of control in his life, which emanates from his control of others.

We may now assess more fully the motivation each man has to fight for Biafra. Benjy Onwura serves the collective will; he fights for what has been, the topography and vegetation destroyed by enemy shelling, as much as he fights against the personal, familial and communal tragedies that "the enemy was doing to him and his people"(15). Onwura's is a nationalistic sentiment that arises from personal experiences. Onwura is fighting to save this community, to provide a home for his future family: "Benjy really was miles away. Now that he was no longer under pressure [from the fighting] his thoughts went immediately to Franca" (17). There is a texture to Onwura's life that confounds his situation at the front. His actions, relationships and thoughts are for a future familial life in this community.

Cyril Agumo, by way of contrast, finds himself fighting as a physical, active response to his life: he beats his wife because she calls his masculinity into question, then he leaves for the front to prove his masculinity (28). Cyril Agumo, like Benjy Onwura, was in the army before the war, and so it is likely that he would have ended up fighting for Biafra anyway. Furthermore, in the Nigerian army, Agumo had a distaste for those who held ranks higher than his own because of their condescending attitude to him (62) and because his wife slept with them (27). Hence, higher levels of the hierarchy alienate Agumo from the system itself. His actions are based on recouping what has been lost to him, personally, not to assist his community. Again, there is an echo of Pa Ukoha's and of Captain's visions--from Survive the Peace--here.

Agumo, the man of action, and Onwura, the man of thought, the one with limited, the other with a larger vision of society are thrust together within the military. Both have their roles to play within the system but Onwura and Agumo are antagonistic in background and outlook. Ironically, the pattern for rewarding men within this system underlines the men's differences and the possibility of conflict. Benjy Onwura is promoted because the system sees a "good battalion commander" in him; further, he is posted to the Awka district because he "will be operating in a familiar area" (4). Onwura's reaction to the promotion is a mixture of pleasure at the recognition of his worth, deflation at the upset it will cause his personal life, and a half-religious note of thanks to God for his "devious" mode of operation (4). Of prime importance here is Onwura's wish to see Franca and to reassure her. Onwura is concerned with the details of living and so he feels negligent going to the front without straightening out his personal affairs. Continuity, propriety, and consideration for others are a part of Onwura, as much as the role of an officer who follows orders: all of these are aspects of his code, derived from the military ordering of his life. Thus, he has much to do but he assimilates the new leadership role with ease.

Cyril Agumo's promotion follows a slightly different course, for he "inherits" the rank of Second Lieutenant when his commander--Ekemezie--is blown up in his trench (64), and he and John have repulsed an attack (72ff), which gives Onwura cause to promote Agumo (87). Apparent acceptance by the state gives Agumo's actions credence, hence future power to act, but he doesn't understand its complexity. Ironically, Agumo's reaction to the first stage of his promotion (the unofficial but necessary assumption of command) has some parallels with Onwura's promotion:

> Cyril was not unaffected by Lieutenant Ekemezie's death, but it was offset by the realization that he was now the

> platoon commander. The more he thought of it the better he felt, and the more he went back to the common belief that death was for the other man. "Oh, God, once again, I offer my thanks and praises to thee." Quickly he muttered a few verses of Psalm 23 (65).

Agumo's elation parallels Onwura's; there is, however, a strange inversion in his assumption of the commander's role. The "common belief that death was for the other man" is an inversion of Onwura's notion that the "inferior got promotion before him" (4): superstition, belief and survival are pitted against rationalizations rather than a logical assessment. And this is understandable because Onwura's earlier attribution of "devious" to God is the rational thought of an educated, mildly skeptical Christian (82). Agumo, contrastingly, does not think inferentially, but superstitiously: "He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths..."(65): God has done this deed for him. This fact is underlined by Agumo's limited intellect and imagination: "He just saw himself in the uniform [of an officer]...Not once had he ever thought what he would do when he got into [it] "(30), except to "show Maria what he could do if given the opportunity" (70). Again, his thoughts are limited to his immediate life: this is an opportunity to win his wife back, re-establishing his sense of self worth.

In his fight with the Nigerians, Agumo distinguishes himself because once actively fighting he loses all fear: his physical response brings his emotions under control. Before the fight, the soldier, John, worries about Agumo's competence, as his barrage of questions and dropping of the obligatory sign of respect, "Sir" (72), illustrate. Seeing Agumo fight so ferociously--his mind occupied with charting physical responses--John's respect returns; Agumo himself realizes he has earned it: "...'sir.' It sounded more respectful than ever before" (73).

Onwura demands respect because of his rank, calling up images of the communal support for this view--"disobedience during wartime" results in a firing squad (100). Agumo does not react to this abstraction; instead, he focusses on the immediate physicality of a situation. His response is an intuited, bestial one: "Oh! Now you know you are in danger" Cyril thought. "Yes, speak softly because if you don't you might start something that will surely swallow you" (104). Onwura's soft voice is perceived as a sound of weakness, while the use of "swallow", an act of consumption, pinpoints Agumo's code of toughness: survival of the fittest. That these are Agumo's thoughts is also important because the spoken word might draw a response and create confusion: he would, in fact, be entering Onwura's realm by speaking, a realm in which we have seen him inhabit a subordinate position. Agumo has interiorized everything, subverted his whole will from the emotive to the bestial self that resides within him. He senses the fear of his prey.

Onwura's call to his orderly breaches the chasm separating the two men, for a larger community's existence is recognized by both men. The running orderly attracts Agumo's attention--physical movement--thereby allowing Onwura "to bring his rifle to the ready" (100), but he "did not think he should cock it yet. It might not even be necessary" (101). It is significant that Onwura's call is to the orderly, for it reveals that a voice breaching the void of this standoff can still have an effect, albeit only to a listener (Agumo hears; the orderly listens); only one still indoctrinated in the specific ideological framework (the existing social hierarchy) will respond. The orderly obeys the command, Agumo reacts.

> "God the Father", thought Cyril looking in the direction of the running orderly. "I had forgotten all about him! Well, the bastard now has his gun at the ready so I have to move with the cunning of a tortoise. Will my heart ever stop the mad dance?"(104).

The call for a third party is a breach of Agumo's code, for he had for the most part stood alone on the periphery of the system, whether in the front lines or in a civilian role. Moreover, the cowboy showdown he envisages is threatened. Similarly, the raising of the gun is not seen as reinforcement for the continuance of argument (I'll lay my gun down and talk again when he's disarmed), but as an explicit threat--he cannot know that it is not primed to be fired. Hence, Onwura's two gestures--raising but not cocking the gun--are misconstrued and read as a single sign--a threat. Adrenalin finally takes over, removing Agumo from the limited intellectual restraint he has left. Consequently, the orderly's hesitation (a rational response to the danger of confronting a "madman": one who wills to usurp the ruling order) initiates Agumo's instincts, so he makes "to unbuckle his belt," shrieks " 'Now!' " (104) and kills Onwura. In keeping with his solitude, his interiorization of all possible actions, Agumo's shriek is in his mind alone, and so the usual warning in a duel is not given. The end note of"...A time to kill/A time to heal...," from Ecclesiastes, once more attests to Agumo's persistence in literal readings of all situations. Onwura's death attests to his inability to communicate, to view Agumo as an ally, as another being with similar frustrations.

The positions of Agumo and Onwura are incompatible at the end because there is no common ground: the latter is in a strong position because of his understanding of his role within the prevalent social order; the former sees no such strength and subsequently intuits the need to enforce recognition of his presence within the order to himself as much as to others. Pleading for his own participatory role, Agumo found Onwura, and by extension the new Biafran society, negligent. Onwura's thoughts were dependent upon his social position and stood in relationship to it; such

> ...situations continually arise in history in which major social classes...react...by considering and condemning the new relationships and the new development of society from the standpoint of the old *ratio* (Lukacs, 47).

Unable to see Biafra as an opportunity to create a more equitable and egalitarian society, in which all could find a place and a role, Onwura condemned a revolutionary vision because he was incapable of escaping the hierarchial order of the military (and analogously of class in Biafra or Nigeria).

Dieter Riemenschneider summarizes the novel's message thus:

> ...the senseless dying of two men of different social backgrounds is made to serve as a paradigm for the senseless killings of thousands of Nigerians, many of them too young and inexperienced to know the issues at stake.[30]

It is a politically neutral statement that requires greater clarification. In the epilogue Agumo shares a cell with other prisoners convicted of killing their officers (108). This fact, in itself, stands as a sharp lesson to nation builders who forget to acknowledge or involve all members of society in participatory roles that fulfill the individual and society's needs. As the time of his execution approaches, Agumo and his fellow inmates reflect that "Nobody can tell what an Ibo man is thinking. You know that yourself" (111). We are made aware that the process of communication involves both the act of speaking and the act of listening, for to know that someone is thinking is not to know what s/he is thinking. Agumo is thinking, but his thoughts are unknown. Onwura's thoughts, too, are unknown to Agumo. Onwura dies, and Agumo feels "a white-hot, blinding flash [explode] in his head" (115). Society opts not to ask Agumo what he is thinking; instead, "the civil war continued" (115) between Nigerians, Biafrans, soldiers, civilians, and within man.

Mezu began with criticism of the hierarchy and, although obviously sympathetic to his protagonist, showed the lack of power and effectiveness of the middle class in society to initiate change. Perhaps there is a deep-rooted unwillingness to promote change because it would affect his social group as much as it would the group he despises--those in the upper echelons who debase position and privilege. Mezu's narrative and apparent line of argument veers away from an analysis of social position to culminate in a simplistic message about the greatness that Biafra would have seen. However, the final image is of an idyllic society which has no basis in fact; it is little more than an uncritical historical fallacy that offers nothing substantial on which society can (re)build. Instead, Mezu's conclusion sadly emphasizes the failure of the principles of Biafra's revolution.

Aniebo's dialectical novel, where one character is outside the author's social class, offers opposing value systems, which dynamically press one another in a variety of ways. The novel criticizes the Nigerian social structure that continued unabated in Biafra. Aniebo acutely summarizes the lack of unity and understanding amongst Biafrans which ultimately contributed to the nation's unpreparedness and downfall. As an analogue, The Anonymity of Sacrifice depicts potential social conflicts that

Nigeria is facing today, while also offering small but sensible advice on what can be done. The nation's leaders must fully involve all citizens equally in the political process. Without communication with all members of the proposed constituency, without taking into account what they have listened to, the imagined community Mezu envisions will be literally nothing more than that.

Did Mezu and Aniebo cut across ethnic, professional, and national affiliations to produce a revised communal vision "for the whole of human society?" The answer, bluntly stated, is no. Ethnic considerations do not enter these mono-tribal narratives; minorities within Biafra (Ibibios, Ijaws, Ogojas) are absent, unseen, unheard, forgotten. Professional affiliations prevail, in Mezu's novel, but his critical appraisal of them emphasizes his socialist stance. There is partial success, then, in the author's awareness of this fractious area of society. Aniebo's choice of a military-oriented perspective requires the maintenance of (hierarchally positioned) professional cliques, whilst it also draws forth the need for an understanding of roles other than that one inhabits: hierarchal jobs, cognitive socialism. Because both narratives are centred within Biafra, they offer mono-national (Biafran) perspectives. Nevertheless, Aniebo's less obvious and emphatic nationalism allows international appropriation of his text's human issues. Mezu's overt Biafran nationalism, his use of specific Biafran historical events for instance, narrows the focus and usefulness of his concerns to others. Neither author creates a communal vision for all mankind, but Aniebo contributes the most to that worthwhile goal.

Omotoso's populist concerns in The Combat have been surpassed by Aniebo because Aniebo indicates areas in which change must be effected--better communication and understanding among all strata of society. Unlike Aniebo, Omotoso pushed for the awakening of one social group. If he had been successful, then conflict not understanding would have been the more likely result. Mezu, like Ekwensi, is a journalist. Both writers are sickened by the waste and loss caused by the war, and so each ends his narrative on (textually, at least) an unsubstantiated fallacy. Ekwensi's narrative, on a more limited scale than Mezu's complete overhauling of communal history, depicted the individual attempting to recoup his losses. Whether stressing the role of an individual or a community, through reportage or art, each writer, in his own way, has created a communal possibility in part.

So far the Nigerian...leftocrats have shirked this responsibility in self-criticism. They have failed to discriminate, even within their ranks, the self-seekers, the opportunists, the radical chic and the starkly ideological illiterate for whom the company is all and for whom no social responsibility exists outside the social "identifying-with" at repetitious seminars and coffee-rooms or the staff clubs with their holiday-resort facilities, beyond the public gesture of association with an equally unproductive Left. It is time to ask the rigorous question: what are you really contributing to society while awaiting the revolution?

-- Wole Soyinka,"The critic and society: Barthes, leftocracy and other mythologies," in Black Literature and Literary Theory, ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (London and New York: Methuen, 1984) 54.

Chapter Three

Aesthetics and Activism in Selected Writings by Wole Soyinka

In contrast to other writers on the Nigerian Civil War, Wole Soyinka has openly expressed and enacted his highly personal views on aesthetics and social commitment: both opinion and action are part of the public record, presenting the opportunity for a more complete understanding of the interrelatedness of literature and politics, through an historical overview of the man, his writings and his actions. The writers we have already examined have offered social visions in their fictive presentations but these have usually been contradictory or incomplete. S.O. Mezu offers a thinly disguised, aesthetically torturous statement of continuing support for the failed Biafran ideal in Behind the Rising Sun. Kole Omotoso presents a general condemnation of war in his novella, where this political end is achieved at some expense to the story's structural harmony. The Biafrans--Achebe, Aniebo, Ekwensi, Nwapa, Okara and Mezu--in their war writings have created a diverse group of social visions without fully reconciling the contradictions that exist between their own actions and their work: they write from the perspective of the Biafran, at a point when Biafra no longer exists, though Ekwensi—

is a partial exception here. The greater documentation by Soyinka of his respective aesthetic and social concerns permits the critic to explore more fully the consciously worked through positions of the artist, including the (dis)congruous elements in each. From this foundation a more complete assessment of the viability of Soyinka's imagined community in Season of Anomy[1] may be made. Soyinka's prison memoir, The Man Died: prison notes of Wole Soyinka (1972),[2] and the syntactically troublesome volume of essays, Myth, Literature and the African World (1976),[3] complement an abundance of uncollected essays, interviews, reviews and biographical fragments, to provide a deeper understanding of his works of fiction.

Wole Soyinka's aesthetic and social positions are difficult to grasp because of their complex base in his individualized interpretation and use of Yoruba mythology and tragedy, classical Greek tragedy and Nietzschean philosophy. An entry into Soyinka's views on aesthetics and commitment is possible, partially, through his responses in a series of interviews (1962-65) conducted by Ezekiel Mphahlele, Lewis Nkosi and Dennis Duerden,[4] although Soyinka's metaphysics are not consciously stated at this point.

Soyinka discerns one line of commitment, "and that is to [his] audience...to make sure they do not leave the theatre bored

[,where there is no] "obligation to enlighten, to instruct, to teach..." (Duerden and Pieterse, 173). This commitment to entertain falls prey to the criticism of Afro-centric groups (the authors of Toward the Decolonization of African Literature, for example, whose aesthetic concerns were discussed in Chapter 1), for Soyinka does not explain or make accessible. Thus, as Soyinka asserts, an audience may well be entertained, "the so-called illiterate group of the community... [may return] night after night" (Duerden and Pieterse, 177), but this does not affirm understanding. Dance will entertain, action will entertain, but, surely, the audience of A Dance of the Forests, for instance, returned to watch the performance again not because of Soyinka's optimistic assessment that "there was something [entertaining] in it, enough to make them want to see it again..." (Duerden and Pieterse, 177), but because, as Soyinka's detractors would have it,[5] of its obtuse, inaccessible nature. The audience returned to try once more to comprehend the spectacle laid before them, much as (wo)men continue to try and understand themselves and their environment. In this respect, Soyinka opens himself to the charges of elitism and obscurity that the "decolonizers" have made.

Stanley Macebuh's "Poetics and the Mythic Imagination"[6], which Soyinka (as editor) published in Transition, is "a close analysis of Soyinka's aesthetic..." (Benson,278) and a rebuttal of the decolonizers' perspective on Soyinka. Of central importance to Macebuh's analysis is the statement of Soyinka's intent, for it is an all-inclusive one that stresses Soyinka's philosophical rather than merely pedagogical, or moral, or political purpose:

> The fundamental intention behind Soyinka's interest in Yoruba myth has little to do with popularising the archaic; his concern would appear rather to be that of discovering in mythic history certain principles upon which contemporary behaviour might be based and by which it might legitimately be judged (Macebuh, 202).

Some measure of obscurity and difficulty has to be expected from a project of this magnitude and Soyinka's efforts to express his philosophical perspective in literary fictions should be applauded because of the implicit attempts at popularizing those views.[7] The earlier explanation of a returning audience for A Dance of the Forests, therefore seems entirely plausible: people return to more fully understand their world. It may only be an intuited sense for them at first, but a sense it is.

In an essay from June-July 1967, "The Failure of the Writer in Africa,"[8] Soyinka's aesthetics take a noticeable political leaning, while his philosophical view remains embedded:

> The writer must...postpone that unique reflection on experience and events which is what makes a writer--and constitute himself into a part of that machinery that will actually shape events (Soyinka in Cartey, 136).

The reason for this turn of events was the dismal failure at self-government of most newly-independent African countries, and the declaration of Biafran Independence the previous month, which strengthened the premonition of impending civil war. Soyinka saw the African writer as directly implicated in Africa's troubles because the "writer [had] done nothing to vindicate his existence...For he [had] been generally without vision" (Soyinka in Cartey, 137). In place of visions of communal life in his art, the African writer had produced "a magnitude of unfelt abstractions" (Soyinka in Cartey, 137). Such abstractions were due to the writer's isolated position in society, for

> ...he mistook his own personal and temporary cultural predicament for the predicament of his entire society and turned attention from what was really happening within that society. He even tried to give society

> something that the society has never lost--its identity (Soyinka in Cartey, 137-38).[9]

Later, Soyinka sets Nigeria aside as a country where "the writers" were "articulately watchful" (Soyinka in Cartey, 140); thus, there is the implicit sense that Soyinka is not condemning himself, that his writing is as much about the community as about the individuals depicted within it. He is not a writer who abdicated his responsibilities because his work is concerned with his society's identity--its culture:

> A concern with culture strengthens society, but not a concern with mythology. The artist has always functioned in African society as the record of the mores and experience of his society and as the voice of vision in his own time (Soyinka in Wastberg, 21, his stress).

The duality of Soyinka's aesthetics could not be clearer: history (the story of one's culture) must be an aspect of one's art; indeed, it must be the basis from which one projects a vision for the community in the future: "the question of a vision simply refers to the kind of human society--individual, parochial or world--that [the writer] believes in" (Soyinka in Wastberg, 52).

The question now remains of how Soyinka sets about producing his vision, and how he involves his community in the visionary process. To answer this question we must turn to his provocative essay "The Fourth Stage," which invokes and draws together the diverse roots of Soyinka's metaphysics and his aesthetic practice.

Of particular importance in "The Fourth Stage" is Soyinka's discussion of Ogun, the Yoruba god with whom the dramatist believes he has the closest affinities, a discussion which provides the most lucid and succinct declaration of the artist's role as artist, as man, and as communal being.[10] It is worth quoting this declaration fully:

> Ogun is the embodiment of Will, and the Will is the paradoxical truth of destructiveness and creativeness in acting man. Only one who has himself undergone the experience of disintegration, whose spirit has been tested and whose psychic resources laid under stress by the forces most inimical to individual assertion, only he can understand and be the force of fusion between the two contradictions. The resulting sensibility is also the sensibility of the artist, and he is a profound artist only to the degree to which he comprehends and expresses this principle of destruction and re-creation

(Myth, 150).

A superficial reading of this statement corresponds directly to the decolonizers' description of Soyinka as one who "treats public issues in the privatist mode and from the universalist-individualist outlook" (Chinweizu et al, 235). More simply put, Soyinka writes about social disintegration from his own subjective perspective, in all of its complexity, and offers that subjectivist outlook as a basis for everyone's outlook. A closer examination of exactly what Soyinka is saying here parallels the decolonizers' view of Soyinka, but turns their pejorative tone into a positive, affirmative one.

In the first sentence of the quotation, Soyinka lays down a simple equation: Ogun is acting man; acting man is both destructive and creative, a state of being dependent on the condition of the Will (the self), which is ascertained through man's communal actions. Such actions offer insights into the nature of existence (its truth), and the archetypical (historical or originating) example of such actions is Ogun's plunge into the chasm to reunite man with god, the physical with the metaphysical. Now, not all men are acting men--only some have the awareness or the courage to undergo "disintegration"--so, only some men may gain access to the truths of existence. Soyinka asserts that the artist is privileged in this respect, but again there is a distinction: artists and "profound" artists. The latter is one who experiences _and_ communicates ("expresses") the experience of the truth as well as the truth itself to others. Thus, Soyinka's use of Yoruba mythology is not, as the decolonizers assert, a "popularising [of] the archaic" (Macebuh, 202); it is a pressing of that mythology, of that pantheon "into further service on behalf of human society, and its quest for the explication of being" (_Myth_ 1).

The artist (writer, painter, musician, actor) as a disciple of Ogun "is the embodiment of challenge...constantly _at the service of society for its full self-realization_ (_Myth_, 30, my stress). For Soyinka the actor is the supreme artist because s/he, in full view of spectator-cum-participants, reveals

> ...the withdrawal of the individual into an inner world from which he returns, communicating a new strength for action.... The community emerges from ritual experience 'charged with new strength for action' because of the protagonist's Promethean raid on the durable resources of the transitional realm; immersed within it, he is enabled empathically to transmit its essence to the choric participants of the rites--the community (_Myth_,

33).

The idea of communication through mental identification is an important one, for although Soyinka raises the stature of the actor to visionary and communicant, there remains a residue of empathic communication within all works of art. Soyinka declares that that which is communicated from the "inner world is not static, [for it is] being constantly enriched by the moral and historic experience of man" (Myth, 35). It is for this reason that Soyinka sometimes shuns the printed text; being static, a text precludes the enrichment of subsequent events, whereas the performance like life itself has a plasticity of shape which

> ...establishes the spatial medium not merely as a physical area for simulated events but as a manageable contraction of the cosmic envelope within which man...fearfully exists. And this attempt to manage the immensity of his spatial awareness makes every manifestation in ritual theatre a paradigm for the cosmic human condition (Myth, 41).

For Soyinka, all can learn from these paradigms,[11] where "the experiential goal [is the] search, [the] affirmation of the communal self..." (Myth, 42).

This renewed affirmation of the communal self through empathic communication with a protagonist is not a simple re-affirmation of the status quo (which is the position of a writer like Elechi Amadi: see, for example, his novel Estrangement and the memoir Sunset in Biafra); rather it embodies the possibility of extension and growth of the self from the destructive/creative experience:

> When ritual archetypes acquire new aesthetic characteristics, we may expect readjustments of the moral imperatives that brought them into existence in the first place, at the centre of man's efforts to order the universe (Myth, 25).

The form of a work of art is thus seen as a determining agent of the new social order: art reflects reality (archetypes); art provides vision (archetypes in new forms); reality awakens to the visionary in art and traditional mores are reshaped. Profound artists thus offer the possibility to society for ideological changes. Soyinka's aesthetics posit a revolutionary art, guided as it is by the need for "writing directed at the product of a social matrix...to remain within it...to resolve the conflicts which belong to that milieu by the logical interactions of its components..." (Myth, 73). Soyinka's aesthetics, ethic-based and communal, derive from the individual's willingness to act and envision. Thus, Soyinka's art is able to move with and adjust to the times.

Wole Soyinka's political activities are more easily accessible (than those of the other writers here) because much has been written about him. Before we view his sense of the civil war, as depicted in The Man Died, a few of his major coups in the political activist arena will be discussed.

In "Drama and the Revolutionary Ideal"[12] and in discussion sessions at the University of Washington, Soyinka offers two notable statements, political in nature but mindful of the artist's role in politics. First, he states that "It is the individual, working as part of a social milieu...who raises the consciousness of the community of which he is part" (Soyinka in Morell, 86). And, second, "I believe implicitly that any work of art which opens out the horizons of the human mind...is by its very nature a force for change, a medium for change" (Soyinka in Morell, 135). The artist awakens the community to problems it faces, while the work of art, through its examination of the raison d'etre, offers impetus and direction to the community.

Soyinka receives his first taste of political activism through his mother's ("Wild Christian's") activities within the Egbaland market women's revolt against colonially imposed taxes.[13] After a long and tiresome round of talks and rallies, the women take decisive action. Significantly, the political act rests on a piece of art--song. Soyinka recounts the scene:

> And then I heard the ultimate challenge of the women, for this was not just a rallying-song, even an ordinary war-song, but the appropriation of the man-exclusive cult--*oro*--by women...(*Aké*, 213).

The appropriation of the male song is the appropriation of the cult; most significantly, it is the claim of equal status with the men: the song has taken on a new aesthetic form because of the women's voices which inhabit it; the new aesthetic form posits a change in the social hierarchy. Soyinka's first direct experience revealed to him the basis of his own politics and aesthetics.[14]

From this vicarious experience of activism as a messenger/observer, Soyinka moved, progressively, into larger roles. In 1959, he contributed to and acted in *Eleven Men Dead at Hola*, a play about colonial repression based on events in Kenya.[15] 1960 brought forth Soyinka's prize-winning independence play, *A*

Dance of the Forests, which posed the question of the type of future an independent Nigeria faced, given its sometime violent past. The mid 1960s saw The (new) Republican and Before the Blackout--satirical sketches on corruption and power politics, written for performance in night clubs and other non-'theatrical' venues--as well as Kongi's Harvest--an examination of the formation of dictatorships.

Perhaps the most significant event of this period is the often cited radio station 'hijack' in 1965. Polling station violence disrupted Western region elections, a protest at election rigging in the national elections and ballot stuffing by Chief Akintola's Nigerian National Democratic Party (recently linked with the Northern People's Congress to form the Nigerian National Alliance). Not surprisingly--to most observers--Akintola's party won the election, unseated Awolowo, and confirmed a Northern base in Western regional politics. Because Akintola was supported by the Sardauna of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello--Nigeria's real leader--the election results were never called into question. Consequently,

> Chief S. L. Akintola was declared the winner, but instead of his taped victory address to the region, listeners...heard part of a tape which began "This is

> the Voice of Free Nigeria" and went on to advise Akintola and his "crew of renegades" to quit the country. ...A warrant was issued for Soyinka's arrest. In the trial...he was acquitted....[16]

Although Soyinka has never fully acknowledged his participation in this act, he has never denied it. The most interesting aspect of the event is the loss of the artistic element--its departure from the social protest plays, like The Trials of Brother Jero (1973--publication) which entertained while also aiming for short term social awareness (on a moderately superficial level), and the more metaphysically oriented plays, like The Road (1985), which more deeply explored the human condition and its meaning. So, there are two political routes that Soyinka consistently follows: art for societies in which there is the time and luxury to record life or promote change; guns for societies in which time is at a premium, expediency the order of the day.

Between these two forms of activism are Soyinka's non-fictional essays. "Of Power and Change" (1966) and "Let's Think Again About the Aftermath of this War" (1967)[17] reflect Soyinka's abilities in this area. The former advocates social change through violence, if necessary:

> If, in the entire continent of Africa, there are not training-grounds for guerilla warfare against the murky spots of Africa, then we might as well give up all hope of a real emancipation of black people on the content...(18).

However, such change must be enacted from within the social collectives (African countries) concerned:

> And it is morally just to make a pact with the devil himself to achieve [change], assuming always that distinguishing between degrees of evil is an exercise that is best performed by the people who actually experience the situation...(18).

Soyinka applies these ideas to a specific situation--the war facing his nation--in the second essay. Believing in the inevitability of an Eastern (Biafran) defeat, Soyinka calls for calm, and negotiation: "A pause at this stage [of the war] may yet open up unsuspected areas of reasonableness and reality: 'a fight to the finish' will finish all, or nothing" (8). Akin to "Civilian and Soldier" in the "October '66" group of poems,[18] "Let's Think Again" is a lone voice amidst the war cries of hate

("Harvest of Hate"), violence ("Ikeja, Friday, Four O'Clock"), massacre ("Massacre, October '66"), death ("For Fajuyi") and malice ("Malediction"). Soyinka posits a living feast as his means of responding to encounters with armed soldiers:

> ... No hesitation then
> But I shall shoot you clean and fair
> With meat and bread, a gourd of wine
> A bunch of breasts from either arm and that
> Lone question--do you friend, even now, know
> What it is all about? (53).

Intimate, individualized, yet universal, the poem, like the essay, calls for thought, for understanding prior to action, and for a sense of where our actions will all lead us. Otherwise, there is no meaning to the deaths on either side. Descriptions of situations Soyinka encountered as well as the mood of the times is evoked simply, giving pause for thought.

When Soyinka questioned the military leaders of Nigeria about the war their response was to incarcerate him. According to the essays and poems, their actions are reprehensible, but Soyinka was up to other things beside writing. In The Man Died Soyinka summarizes his activities:

> ...denunciation of the war in the Nigerian papers; [his] visit to the East; [his] attempt to recruit the country's intellectuals within and outside the country for a pressure group which would work for a total ban on the supply of arms to all parts of Nigeria; creating a third force which would utilize the ensuing military stalemate to repudiate and end both the secession of Biafra, and the genocide-consolidated dictatorship of the Army...(The Man Died, 19).

The latter point--the "third force"--is the most important because it stresses Soyinka's independent political option. Where then did he stand?

The word "creating" suggests that he played a leading role, if not the leading role, in the "third force". Hence, when Soyinka declares his commitment to "all feasible acts which would demonstrate an ethical absolute..."(2), an absolute which exhibits itself in a sense of uncompromising justice, an independent judiciary, which "makes it a crime for any man or group to molest or in any way interfere with another for reasons of tribe...," etc. (22), then we understand the third force to be anti-tribal (unlike Elechi Amadi, for instance, who recognizes the problems of tribalism, but accepts them because of his own vested interests--his involvement in the Rivers tribal union). Such an anti-tribal force, Soyinka agrues presents the only "truly national, moral and revolutionary alternative..." (95); what is more it is already in operation in the Mid-West--"Victor Banjo's Third Force" (95). The third force is anti-tribal and justice centred, with its own military wing, but what more is there? How will it go about effecting change in accordance with its abiding principle?

The "third force" appears to be composed of Christopher Okigbo, Lt. Cols. Fajuyi and Banjo, the Marxist Major Alale (155), and perhaps Chinua Achebe, whom Soyinka had worked with on "a new front" (155) in 1967. The work was, in part, the "running [of] a sensitive link in the 'underground railroad' rescuing Eastern soldiers...and even some Westerners..." (150) from the Northern dominated army, an army composed of "soldiers [who were] opportunist outgrowths of the mystique of power..." (150). Presumably the soldiers are Gowon's men, and because it is September 1966, presumably the people are being rescued from the riots and murders taking place in the North against non-Northerners. Given the opportunity of working more directly for his country, Soyinka responds to Lt. Col. Fajuyi's (the Western Region's military governor) request (159) with plans for trips to the North and the East, as well as with possible discussions with Ojukwu and Gowon.[19] In Fajuyi et al, Soyinka sees a "committed few", who, unlike Amadi or the ultimately disillusioned Mezu, represent the possibility of growth and extension in society, not merely the uncritical reproduction of it. Bakunin-like, Soyinka foresees creation arising from destruction: "any situation which is born of the past remains always malleable in the hands of a committed few" (The Man Died, 160). Soyinka's idealistic statements sound plausible, and his trips and discussions (Gowon would not grant him an interview) should not be easily dismissed; but the social program Soyinka envisions, especially the method of implementing it, fails to materilize.

Perhaps, Soyinka, Fajuyi, Banjo or one of the others will convince Gowon and Ojukwu to lay down their arms and hand over power so that elections can take place and the people can choose from the manifestoes of various parties. This seems to approach Soyinka's own line of thought: where, "hopes of building anything approaching a socialist state" (177) rest on "a Third Force which thinks in terms of a common denominator for the people" (178).[20] On the question of what kind of socialist state, we are left with the humanistic:

> It is better to believe in people than in nations. In

> moments of grave doubts it is essential to cling to the reality of peoples; these cannot vanish, they have no questionable a priori--they exist. ...Judgement can only be applied to peoples, judgement that is, in its basic ethical sense can be applied only to peoples; loyalty, sacrifice, idealism, even ideologies are virtues which are nurtured and exercised on behalf of peoples (The Man Died, 175).

We return to Soyinka's experience as prisoner; to The Man Died, as an account of the experience. Therein, perhaps, lie answers to our questions. The Man Died is itself a political act; Soyinka makes it consciously so, and raises our awareness of this fact in "The Unacknowledged" section: "Books and all forms of writing have always been objects of terror to those who seek to suppress the truth." Soyinka's attacks on those who caused the war as well as on those who brought about his incarceration underscore the truth of this statement. The reviews of The Man Died were vitriolic personal attacks, of which Adamu Ciroma's review will serve as a representative example:

> As a political being Soyinka appears to be naive and simplistic...Wole Soyinka reveals himself as nothing but

> a narrow Yoruba jingoist unwilling to concede that other Yorubas who seek association with other ethnic groups could also justify the wisdom of their political stance. ...Soyinka had Fajuyi firmly under his spell and...acted as Fajuyi's intellectual storm trooper and snooper.[21]

Such initial reactions, inherently contradictory--in this case--consistently fail to acknowledge the conditions under which Gowon's regime held Soyinka (eighteen months of solitary confinement), or to relate the activities of others, like J.P. Clark, who tried to discredit Soyinka's reputation while, consciously or not, laying the ground for his possible execution. Clark told many people that Soyinka was "suffering from chronic syphilis..." (The Man Died, 294): "One disease from which it would be natural for [Soyinka] to disintegrate suddenly, both mentally and physically, and die" (295).

Against such treacherous acts Soyinka's book must be judged a weak reply, for it threatens no-one's life. Indeed, in "Ten Years After", a new introduction written for the Arrow edition of The Man Died, Soyinka himself partially accedes to his critics. In the new edition he has "eliminated...some now superfluous details and comments on the atrocities committed by the army...."[22] Soyinka answers complaints against his lack of a political ideology and the remaining assault on General Gowon, with a position that owes much to his aesthetics; he wishes to make people share and feel the experience, he does not wish to intellectualize it out of their reach, nor--in Gowon's case--continue "flogging a politically dead horse":

> Criticism of such language [the attacks on Gowon, et al] is simply squeamish or christianly--language being expected to turn the other cheek, not stick out its tongue.... Such criticism must begin by assailing the seething compost of inhuman abuses from which such language took its being, then its conclusions would be worthy of notice (The Man Died, 1985, xiii).

It is an attempt at emphatic communication of the artist's plunge into the chasm, where the destruction he faces is turned to creative purposes because "the language we use in addressing culpable power is, in itself, part of the needful preparatory activity towards this liberation of a popular political will..." (xv). Furthermore,

> ...this language was not simply the language of one 'aggrieved' writer; it is the hidden language of an

> oppressed populace--the writer does no more than expose it, re-appropriating it for the commencement of liberation therapy (xvi).

The individual experience is a reflection of the communal one; the two are inextricably bound, serving and enlarging the vision and wisdom of each other.

Given this purpose, it is no surprise that, in the original text Soyinka went one stage further in the individual's identification with community to pose his book, along with George Mangakis' testimonial, as political tools in the service of the international community: "It seems to me that testimonies such as this should become a kind of chain-letter hung permanently on the leaden conscience of the world" (The Man Died, 1979, 11). This expression of intent echoes Soyinka's aesthetics once more because even in the international community, it is the individual (as one in a chain of individuals) who acts in order to alert the greater society to the need for change. Myth, Literature and the African World presented "acting man" in the "profound artist as the medium of self-knowledge and understanding." The Man Died delivers the individual with his role in social life, with the ability to define stasis (a stoppage in the acquisition of self-knowledge) or change (an expansion of out limits of self-awareness): "do I say yes to this or no?" (12). Having related this convergance of politics and art, let us examine the social construct that emerges from Soyinka's habitation in the destructive chasm (prison).

The Man Died is a "first step" (15) toward revolutionary change, and so, bearing this point in mind, we cannot expect more than the first stage of communal reorientation. Soyinka's position toward his incarceration quickly becomes clear: he will not "Keep silent in the face of tyranny" (13); even small examples such as Mallam D's (the interrogator's) use of manacles invite a response. Hence, Soyinka begins the first of many hunger strikes against injustice. In addition to the hunger strike, Soyinka writes an essay--not the desired confession--designed to have his captors try him publicly. But why a trial? Soyinka has already made it abundantly clear that this aspect of society is now a joke (23); it is a "stupid moment" (72) of an untransformed consciousness, which responds to a residual sense that all in society is as it was before, or is as it should be.

But, society and social practice have changed, a fact that comes out poignantly in the scene in which an Igbo woman is mistakenly placed in Soyinka's cell (42). She breaks down in tears, believing it impossible that one of Soyinka's stature (in the popular consciousness) has been incarcerated. Her hopes in the ideals of society have been vanquished. Yet, there is room to envision a more enlightened future because each prisoner gives strength the other. Their gestures to one another (43) embolden them to their future isolation--alone physically, but spiritually in communion. Thus, at a base level there is communal continuity. Such continuity embodies Soyinka's sense of society in its purest form.

At one point during his stay at Kiri-Kiri prison, Soyinka is led to believe that he will be assassinated (75). There appears to be no road out, but he eventually draws in other inmates who agree to riot, hopefully forestalling Soyinka's removal. The riot fails to materialize but others on the outside prevent the aircraft--part of the assassination plot--from being utilized (78), and thus Soyinka remains at Kiri-Kiri. Although the failure of the riot reflects weaknesses and a certain naivety in Soyinka's stress on communal change, his group (specifically, those outside prison) held together sufficiently to fulfill their immediate aims.

Reflecting the centrality of the individual in his metaphysics, Soyinka's first act upon entering the prison was "to be alone with [his] thoughts" (46), to face his environment and understand it. Only after such self-understanding could he be of use to others; without it, Soyinka might break, bringing about the disintegration of a communal whole as a consequence. Soyinka encapsulates this idea in the following passage:

> If doubts are created, even in one solitary example... then you have established your race of serfs whose docility will be justified for ever by 'if he could break, then who are we to struggle?' (96).

Again, the concern expressed is for the largest social construct--"humanity"--through the individual's efforts. During his incarceration Soyinka's social vision remains unimpaired, reliant upon "necessary social egalitarian agreements as the norm for any community of human beings" (237), a 'socialist state', humanist in nature.

The poems Soyinka had smuggled from prison (239)[23] are important for they recapitulate artistically the fusion of his individual-communal concerns. The first poem, "Live Burial", describes Soyinka's prison condition, and affirms his vitality: a sign of hope to others who may have become disillusioned. Similarly, the prison poems represent hope for Soyinka because his confinement is now known to others outside of the régime. The opening stanza of "Live Burial" evokes the situation fully: "Sixteen paces/By twenty-three. They hold/Seige against humanity/And truth/ Employing time to drill through to his sanity." The size of his cell, the loss of justice, the individual who undergoes a rite of passage for society ("humanity"), and time as a weapon of the moment for his captors are detailed. It is a sparse poem that develops into a more complete description of the individual's condition. The later use of "Stygian Mysteries", in addition to the use of "necropolis" and "Muse", emphasizes the effect that physical confinement has on Soyinka's mind; he is being pushed further and further into relying upon past rather than current mental stimulants, a point made abundantly clear in the images of shuttle and crypt in A Shuttle in the Crypt.[24]

"Flowers for My Land" dwells on the nation, now a parched area in which nothing grows. Literal and metaphoric images of sewing and harvest are interwoven with ironic deliberation to expose the destructiveness of war through its juxtaposition with the creativeness of man in nature.[25] "Death alike/We sow. Succeeding horror/Whets inhuman appetite/I do not Dare to think these bones will bloom tomorrow." For his land, Soyinka seeks an organic life of "Voices of rain in sunshine/Blue kites on ivory-cloud/ Towers/Smell of passing hands on mountain flowers." A cleansing rain with its potential for growth is evoked. Birds, clouds, flowers, and "passing" rather than raping hands illustrate the interactive quality of nature and man. This vision soon sours, for contemporary events are destructive and wasteful: "Four steel kites, riders/On shrouded towers/Do you think/Their arms are spread to scatter mountain flowers?" The questioning nature of the stanza echoes the scene of Picasso's "Guernica", wherein the destructive capacity of aircraft is something that their(German or Nigerian) crews do not immediately see or experience. Hope rests in Soyinka's final incitement: "Orphans of the world/Ignite!" Children who have lost their parents to the war must "ignite" their anger, utilize their pain and suffering as momentum, fuse together into a whole that "Makes pact.../Against..." the warlords. The binding ideology is "Justice".

Both poems reflect Soyinka's aesthetics and activism, calling, as they do, for the audience's participation, their empathic entry into the world the poet depicts.

In the realm of political activism as well as in the arena of aesthetic theorizing, Wole Soyinka presents a surprisingly consistent position. Soyinka's vision is challenging because of his inherent belief in the beneficial nature of adapting, extending and changing traditions and mores to accommodate historical circumstances; it is a less clearly defined vision, though, because we understand where we have come from and perceive what must be changed, but know little of how the changes will be effected, nor, definitively, to where they will lead. Abiola Irele's criticism of Soyinka's war writings, and of literature as a vehicle for social change, appears validated: "Literature is a poor vehicle of social thought, and literary images cannot have the same clarity as ideas worked out in the framework of a social philosophy."[26] Even so, the flexibility of Soyinka's project, the ability to continuously evaluate, condemn and change, offers the greater reward because social philosophies endanger humanity when they become deified and the perpetuation of the system becomes an end in itself. A lack of clarity in the means to an ambiguously defined social end enforces vigilance, participation and the quest for understanding in and from others: these abilities mark the character of Ofeyi, in Season of Anomy, as he continuously adapts his blueprint for political change in accordance with the social changes taking place around him.

Amadi's projection of the coming gulf between rich and poor and the related estrangement of both groups is the social fact of pre-war Nigerian society, depicted in Season of Anomy. Against Amadi's conception of Nigerian society as virtually classless,

> Soyinka's treatment indicates that the real sources of tension within society are not the apparent ones of

> regionalism and atavism. These are merely the tools in the hands of class interests.[27]

And, the specific class utilizing these tools for much of the novel is the ruling party, the board members of the Cocoa Cartel: represented as a "self-consolidating, regurgitative, lumpen Mafiadom of the military, the old politicians and business enterprise" (The Man Died, 1979, 181). Opposing the Cartel's capitalist orientation is the community of Aiyéró, which "comes very close to a commitment to socialist ideals,"[28] and its representatives: Ofeyi (a Cartel advertising man) Iriyise (his lover; also, a singer/dancer) and Demakin (a guerilla-trained, self-appointed assassin). The communal vision incorporated into the structure of Season of Anomy centers on Ofeyi and his relationships to institutions, ideals and people. In fact, Ofeyi's relationship to each group is dictated by the organic structure Soyinka gives to the novel.

"Seminal I-II," specifically representing the development a state of a plant, becomes, in the novel, "The genesis of a strategy whose ultimate aim is to destroy exploitation . . ." (Ngara, 100). Ofeyi is the Cartel's "promotions man" (Season, 2), who falls under the spell of the utopian community of Aiyéró while visiting that community at the Cartel's behest. The contrast of

Cartel and Aiyéró is not completely apparent to Ofeyi, but his interest is fixed there because of his lover's transformation: the relationship between Ofeyi and Iriyise takes on symbolic overtones, as the following passage suggests:

> Iriyise remained with him and, soon after, he began to wonder if his resolve to remain in Aiyéró had been entirely his or if it had to do with a sense of rediscovering the woman within that questioning environment. She took to Aiyéró as a new organism long in search of its true element. He began to wonder which provided him a cause for his long hours of unrest; Aiyéró, or simply this woman . . . (3).

Community and individual, earth and ideal are interwoven to create the symbolism. Thus, the genesis of a strategy is first seen operating in this awakening scene, where Ofeyi's mind becomes occupied with questions of relations, of community, of being. Ofeyi is becoming intellectually attached to Aiyéró because each of these questions has a significant value for him, through Iriyise whereas the world of the Cartel has had little of comparative value to offer. This interest in the self (that is, the sense of being) is the trademark of the Soyinkan hero, one who explores the untapped resources of the will to uncover truths which will be shared with the community. Ofeyi has the searcher's impulse, but he is, on the surface, concerned initially only with what lies there.

The contented nature of Aiyéró, for instance, is a source of disturbance because, Ofeyi says, "the state of content can become malignant. Like indifference" (6). Ofeyi is puzzled that Aiyéró remains the same, that the community seems "untouched" by its youths' travels (6). These concerns are of interest because Ofeyi pre-empts the attacks of several of Soyinka's critics by raising these points first. Geoffrey Hunt, for example, suggests that Soyinka's works centre, thematically, on "Romantic history . . . which is not interested in the realities of the past but in expressing the author's feelings about the unpleasant present."[29] According to Hunt, Aiyéró has no material or physical base historically; it is but an authorial illusion, created without complex relations with the past or the present, to "conceal the fact that the past way of life had its own exploitative mechanism . . . " (Hunt, 74). Similarly, Gerald Moore illustrates the illusory nature of Aiyéró when he informs us that "[a]t no point does the novel enquire critically whether Aiyéró was ... a model which could conceivably be applied to a complex industrializing and urbanizing society like Nigeria."[30] What these critics are revealing is the "entirely unrelieved idealist foundation and direction ..."[31] to Soyinka's communal vision and aesthetics. Soyinka, however, is more imaginative and artistic than his critics would seem to suggest. The Cartel and Aiyéró do not exist in Nigeria as "single unified organization[s]..." (Booth, 150); rather,

> What Soyinka has done is to isolate and project certain real and crucial elements within Nigerian society, using the greater clarity and imaginative coherence of art in order to draw out their essential political implications (Booth, 150).

Soyinka's primary concern is not with the particularities of specific ideologies within specific environments at specific times; instead, he is concerned with the means at each individual's disposal to pinpoint society's problems and to institute alternative social formations. It is the more general practice of an artist, not the precise concern of a politician.

Ofeyi encapsulates Soyinka's concerns, and as an outsider, he has potentially greater interests than those of Aiyéró, for he is not bound by its traditions. It is for this reason that Ofeyi becomes interested, as the Aiyéróans have not, in extending the communal benefits he perceives in Aiyéró to all of his nation's people. Ahime, an Aiyéró elder, notes this character trait and states: " 'We find no virtue in aggression, son. Evangelism is a form of aggression' " (Season, 6). Ofeyi's response to Ahime underscores his own relation to the pattern of the Soyinkan hero, for in saying' " I know. That is a contradiction that I have yet to resolve within myself' " (6) he bares (and bears) the inner creative-destructive contradiction at the root of Soyinka's metaphysics: Ogun's archetypal battle of the will. Accordingly, Ofeyi's involvement with Aiyéró and his path to the resolution of this contradiction will answer the question of what means are viable to the attainment of an ideal society. A societal answer will come forth because

> The tragic hero patterned on Ogun will, like the god, act on behalf of his people, and the people will reap the rewards of his painful experience. The protagonist attains 'a cosmic experience' in the sense that if he survives after his suffering, he is no longer a human being; he is an 'anjonnu,' literally a transcendental being, one who is physically a human being, yet belongs to the spirit world (Katrak, 20).

Abstract and alien (to the uninitiated) ideas such as these are more easily understandable in the drama because of the visual representation available to the spectator-participants. Staring at the pages of a book and trying to envision a print creation entering the realm of the spirits is more difficult. Nevertheless, Ofeyi's actions on the page invite our participation, and if accepted are going to lead us into his psychic battle, which represents a learning experience. The knowledge and insights gained will thus place Ofeyi in the spirit world (our minds), while application of the knowledge retains him in the physical world.

It is some way into the novel before Ofeyi faces his battle, but each of the earlier sections prepare elements that will be encountered there. Aiyéró may be an unsubstantiated ideal; Ofeyi may "fail to move beyond the typical and functional ... to come fully alive" (Moore, 133) as more than an idea, but his attachment to Aiyéró is through Iriyise; he will understand the community through an understanding of her, and so Iriyise must be seen literally and symbolically as Ofeyi's quest:

> When they were at last alone she would only say, it filled me Ofé, it filled me completely where I was so empty. I know I am now complete. Who on earth, what on

> earth [reflects Ofeyi] could have taught her to say that, whose only knowledge of fulfillment till now had been the aftermath of love! (Season, 7).

The desire to understand Aiyéró as embodied in Iriyise is a conscious pursuit of wholeness for himself and for society. Indeed, Iriyise's encapsulation of the ideal brings forth, from her, an explicit statement of Ofeyi's role: " 'Don't hold up our people much longer Ofé. You belong to us before all others. Us!' " (8). It is a call for commitment to an harmonic union on a national scale, where Ofeyi's individuality is to be superceded by the communal will. He is to work for the community, not himself.

Upon a return to Aiyéró, Ahime pointedly asks Ofeyi, " 'Did the woman lead you back?' " (18). Ofeyi's dismissal of the suggestion should not be taken at face value because Iriyise is rapidly diminishing in Ofeyi's vision as a woman while she is expanding as a symbol. Ahime's question merely ties woman to Aiyéró all the tighter. It is therefore not surprising that Ofeyi decides to utilize his occupation to create advertisements that offer messages about the material and the ideal worlds:

> Ofeyi envisioned the parallel progress of the new idea, the birth of the new man from the same germ as the cocoa

> seed, the Aiyéró ideal disseminated with the same powerful propaganda machine of the Cartel throughout the land, taking hold of undirected youth and filling the vacuum of their transitional heritage with virile shoots (19).

Conversely, the Cartel will get the " '...story of the cocoa plant from seed to ripening...' "(20). Ofeyi's plan is open, intellectual, and soon prohibited; the idealistic sub-messages for social change are uncovered by the Cartel and end when he is sent on 'study' leave.

"Buds III-V" mark Ofeyi's return from study leave and the beginnings of renewed efforts. The section title signifies an organic growth, while it actually marks the buds of growing "confrontation between the forces of oppression and exploitation and the forces of freedom and justice..." (Ngara, 100). Ofeyi's work is primarily intellectual and is prepared at a distance from what is actually happening in society; subsequently, the oppressive and exploitative acts of the Cartel must be assumed by the reader. Iriyise provides support for this point when she reminds Ofeyi " 'You have never seen me at my best' " (Season, 39)--it is a recrimination directed at his distance from the implementation of his work, from the completeness of the Aiyéróan ideal, and from day-to-day life. His "sense of superfluity" (43) underscores his non-active role. Iriyise's statement is also ironic because, in this case, her dance is a non-event. In place of the opening of "Pandora's Box" to release balloons and puppets, and then its reopening to release Iriyise from a cocoa-pod, the audience and Ofeyi view only the former: undiluted anti-Cartel propaganda (44), which creates a "hint of cosmic threat" (43) (indeed, of universal disorder) for all involved. That the cosmic threat is only a hint re-suggests Ofeyi's distance from affairs.

Failure on the level of subtle propagandist (artist) initiates a new sense of urgency in Ofeyi. He moves closer to events and to personal experiences of the Cartel's repressiveness when he appears at the headquarters to resign. A group of soldiers wait to arrest him, but Ofeyi's resignation letter is symbolic of his creation of new rules for the game; he leaves by a different door (54) and escapes captivity. While the Cartel's violence has begun to bloom, Ofeyi has moved from the position of an active but distant participant to a front-line role.

The opening of "Buds V" with the questions, "Where is Celestial?" (59) "Where is Iridescent?" (60), mark the first overt statements by the masses of their relation to the communal ideal: as is the case with Ofeyi, their interest is through and due to Iriyise. That "Iriyise could be raised in a foundling home and there would only be differences in detail in her, not of essential nature" (65) serves to underscore her representational and symbolic qualities. Hope of a mass movement is raised, while Ofeyi's propaganda efforts are shown to have borne some fruit; the movement must now be entered. Significantly, the union of many around the symbol of Iriyise comes at a time of threat to the symbol--Iriyise will have acid thrown in her face (62) if she returns to the city before a beauty pageant is over. The synchronous nature of these two events permits Soyinka to point to the fragile nature of symbols (and ideas), and subsequently of the order(s) they represent. As with all symbols, but especially with one which represents an organic order, Iriyise requires the strength and support offered to her; in this way her reliance on Ofeyi--" 'I've never leant on a man the way I lean on you. No one' " (67)--is of paramount importance. Ofeyi has become "Custodian of the Grain" (4), the one to whom falls the task of keeping the grain alive: here, both as literal figure and metaphorical creation. Consequently, Ofeyi is now participating on an emotional as well as an intellectual level; the idea is becoming part of a personalized battleground, wherein he 'grows' larger than a character-type, becomes more than an idea for deployment, yet retains both type and idea's representational qualities.

The Cartel's violence has borne fruit, but there has been a communal response, a smaller bud perhaps in the consciousness of people uniting around the symbol, but it need not be as pessimistic as the conclusion to Ofeyi's metaphysical vision:

> Vision is eternally of man's own creating. The woman's acceptance, her collaboration in man's vision of life results time and time again in just such periodic embodiments of earth and ideal. ...It was simply that however briefly, with that transience that was a seal of truth on its own nature, Iriyise would reveal within her person a harrowing vision of the unattainable (80).

So Ofeyi realizes that there is more work, more effort, and more searching involved within himself. Iriyise's symbolic capacity (the unity of Aiyéró) is something he must discover within himself before he attempts to implement it without.

The progress Aiyéró makes in the dissemination of ideas throughout the "Tentacles" section of the text eases the self-searching that Ofeyi deemed a necessary course of action for communal success. However, as Emmanuel Ngara reminds us, the tentacles belong to both sides:[32]

> Now the men of Aiyéró are penetrating into different parts of the country. ...the Cartel...[w]ith its 'long tentacles' ... is now determined to launch a ruthless campaign of re-assertion against its opponents (Ngara, 101).

Ofeyi's response to Cartel initiated attacks on the Shage Dam and Cross-river projects is a return to Aiyéró, to an inner sanctuary, where he meditates upon the violence in generally historical terms: "what answer...must [be made] to the puzzled dead searching in the living for the transformation of their rotted deeds..." (Season, 87). The spiritual act of examining the will has begun for Ofeyi; he has become one who, as Soyinka describes it, is

> ...now being forced by disaster, not foresight, to a reconsideration of [his] relationship with the outer world, [who] must have the courage to determine what alone can be salvaged from the recurrent cycle of human stupidity (Soyinka in Cartey, 141),

which is observable in the massacre of aliens at Shage Dam (Season, 168) and in Cross-river (192), and the kidnapping of Iriyise (148). The latter point emphasizes that the decision

Ofeyi makes will have personal as well as communal--there may be "penetration of Aiyéró through the land" (83)--ramifications.

Once more Ofeyi decides to act, but this time he is completely involved in the course of events that plague his country because he actively seeks Iriyise(the communal ideal): a physical as well as an intellectual and an emotional side develops in him (he can be knocked unconscious for example) and in his strategy (his search). Significantly, the introduction of a physical aspect to his character reintroduces and extends the destructive side of Ofeyi's inner-contradiction.[33]

Throughout the novel Ofeyi has been torn between the contradiction's two impulses, beginning most markedly with his study leave meetings with Demakin and Taiila. Disillusioned by his impotence while abroad, Ofeyi met with Demakin, "that self-effacing priest of violence, the Dentist," who "had resuscitated his own wavering commitment" (Season, 22) because of his arguments about the potency of violence: "The Cartel had killers and used them; the Dentist would redress the balance, at least to some extent" (23). Ofeyi appears convinced about the efficacy of violence, for defensive purposes at least; there is "the need to protect the young seedling, even by violent means" (23). A fully-fledged program of violent social change is not an option for Ofeyi because he realizes that violence is difficult to control. A "violent change of government" usually meant "sustaining the putrid form of power with a market in flesh, an internal slave slave route lined in shameless sophistries" (99). Ofeyi's position on violence is reflected in both Soyinka's words and in those he gives Old Man in Madmen and Specialists. Respectively, the statements are: "The trouble is how many does one kill. For there are others" (The Man Died, 134-35); and, in response to Dr. Bero's threats of death, Old Man says,

> I said, why do you hesitate? (Pause.) Once you begin there is no stopping. You say, ah, this is the last step, the highest step, but there is always one more step. For those who want to step beyond, there is always one more step (Six Plays, 265).

Violence is a troublesome, noisy, deconstructive event; Ofeyi is not keen on it because he has a vision (i.e., a construct) that he hopes will bring "a restorative idyll..." (Season, 22), such as Taiila is providing him now, for all.

Contrary to Demakin's program of violence, without vision--he despises fiction (89)--Ofeyi returns to ideas of peaceful change: " 'Time to educate on a truly comprehensive scale. Nothing can be achieved by isolated acts, we have to organize' " (100). Akin to the Cartel's earlier prohibition and attempted arrest of Ofeyi, the response to organized education is a wholesale slaughter, "the slaughter of innocents" (106). The people have become and have been made aware of inequities within the system and have attempted to redress them with force. But it is a sporadic, emotive response, which gives rise to a plan by Demakin that has a constructive note to it:

> '...All that we must do is take control of that violence [i.e., of the people] and direct it with a constructive economy. Our people kill but they have this sense of selectiveness. They pick key men, but they also kill from mere association... We cannot stop it even if we want no part of such righteous vengeance. We must also set up a pattern of killing, the more difficult one. Select the real kingpins and eliminate them' (107).

Again, Ofeyi initially balks at the suggestion for he wishes a " '...just peace' " (131); he remains concerned about what the violence will give rise to, communally, at the point where Demakin cannot "envisage anything" (107)--the future. Nevertheless, "[e]xcept for details of scruple [Ofeyi] found himself accepting the fact that they were kindred spirits" (132).

The humane remains a part of all that Ofeyi envisions and so when he decides to help Demakin choose the most important target in the Cartel for assassination (138), his personal relationship with Chief Batoki (the target) and his family give Ofeyi pause for thought (138-40). Unlike Demakin, Ofeyi can imagine the effect of Batoki's death on his family. There is a complexity to the quality of his thought that prolongs Ofeyi's analysis of self for the community while simultaneously impeding his union with the community. Thus, Season is a "Yoruba tragedy", in the sense in which Ketu H. Katrak has defined the term in her book, Wole Soyinka and Modern Tragedy. Tragedy, Katrak writes,

> ...germinat[es] from the protagonist's confrontation with inimical forces, which results in 'the disintegration of the self.' The consequent tragic feeling brings [Ofeyi] to the very edge of consciousness when he feels completely isolated from the environment and from other people. He undergoes intense suffering, after which he may be able 'to re-assemble himself' through an act of will, or he may die. Whether the protagonist is alive or dead at the conclusion of the drama, his tragic experience itself is profitable both for his self-knowledge and for his people. Society

> benefits in different ways--the hero can bring the community to a new knowledge of itself, or he can display an exemplary moral courage in the face of social injustice (19).

Isolated now, Ofeyi's 're-assembly' takes place in his quest for a reunion with Iriyise[34] which begins when he travels to Shage Dam, then to Cross-river, and finally to Temoko.

Ofeyi's isolation from the external world and communion with the symbol is brought forth in detail in "Harvest IX." In Iriyise's room,

> Strangely he felt protected, ever tightly sheathed against the impact of disaster. It was a sheath of her own colours, scents, sounds and textures. At first it had all but choked and constricted him, then it merely settled over him, lightly and evenly (147, my stress).

This light and even protective sheath is soon disturbed, however, when Zaccheus enters to tell Ofeyi that Iriyise has been part of the Cartel's harvest (148). The arrest and imprisonment of Iriyise, symbol of the new communal order (abstraction) and Ofeyi's lover (realism)--the desecration of the purity of the idea--makes some form of violence more imminent.

Driving to Cross-river Ofeyi swerves but hits an object that flies at his car. The object is a hunted man, whose pursuers mutilate him. The mutilation--slit throat, castration, and genitals shoved in his mouth (160)--incites Ofeyi: "...on his face was a fantastic resolve to drive through again and again whenever the killers found the nerve to attempt the removal of their comrade (161), whom Ofeyi has knocked down. As significant as this act of destructiveness and violence may be, of equal significance is Ofeyi's ability to reorder his mood:

> He began to drive with more harmonic concentration, bringing his mind into flow with the functioning of the engine, washing his rage, then his over-responsive skin through air stream, fumigating his psyche through the invisible exhaust...(162).

The significance of the latter passage is twofold. First, Ofeyi is a character of different moods, which fluctuate between the creative-destructive poles when he acts; the communion here between himself and his environment reflects the organic structure of Aiyéró (and of the novel for that matter), and thus reveals a natural truth that could be communicated empathically to the reader. Second, and conversely, Soyinka's chosen method of expressing the scene denies full empathic communication because it is descriptive only in a mildly active way: if we were taken into Ofeyi's mind (the narrative becoming stream-of-consciousness) at this point, rather than leaving us reading about a third person, then the scene would be more successful.

The reordering of his mood to a more peaceful and harmonic state invites constructive thoughts, where viewing Shage Dam will let him "see something our men from Aiyéró have helped building in Cross-river..."(164).

> 'New projects like the Shage Dam meant that we could start with newly created working communities. New affinities, working-class kinships as opposed to the tribal. We killed the atavistic instinct once for all in new ventures like Shage' (165).

Such nation-building thoughts are crumbled by the empirical evidence that waits at the Dam: "a display of floating bodies so still that they seemed anchored". Ofeyi thinks, indeed hopes, that some of his "comrades" are among the dead, for they would provide a "monument" to rally around, a physical, undeniable scene of the social constructors floating, mutilated by the destructors.

The thoughts are short-lived, though, and Ofeyi seeks refuge in art, "running lines in his head to stop the negative flow of implications from stark reality" (168), from the destructive side of the monument, from the inbuilt testament to the Cartel's success, to the fact that it is winning. The vision of bloated human forms and of rusted machinery gives birth to a middle-ground of hope: "The hope was that something took their place, and he meant something beyond the concrete structures" (169). It is

Emmanuel Ngara's discussion of "Harvest" serves as a conclusion to the political developments in Season thus far:

> For the forces of oppression the massacres, the destruction of progressive projects, the capture of Iriyise are a harvest, a product of a well-planned course of action. There is a dialectical relationship between the growth of the progressive idea and the growth of brutality and human slaughter. ... It is a well known fact that the more determined the oppressed people became, the more ruthless the oppressors become. In Soyinka's book the antagonism between the two forces finally leads to a hideous form of lawlessness which sweeps the whole country which is symbolized by the title of the book, Season of Anomy" (Ngara, 101).

The difference between the large scale violence of the Cartel and that proposed by Ofeyi through Demakin is the more personalized, less anonymous nature of the latter's form: "the victim ceased to be a faceless cipher, a factor in a social equation [a criticism of Irele's call for the latter in place of literature] which must be subtracted for a working formula" (Season, 184). Even if Demakin only concerns himself with the political function of the target, Ofeyi is there as conscience, as a reminder that society should not have to be humanitarian, visionary and executioner in one.

Ofeyi, thus, progresses further into the revolution-by-violence camp of Demakin, but he is always aware of the immediate constructive benefits. In Cross-river, for instance, the police move away from the "alien" section of the city, abet a mob, and thus leave the aliens defenseless to the Muslim mob's attack. Ofeyi and Zaccheus view the retreat of the police, the boarding up of the church, and the fire; impotence evokes thoughts of Demakin "with his rifle and telescopic lens and [Ofeyi] longed for his precise solutions. If even one or two were picked off from this distance, the rest would abandon the attack and flee" (193). Selective assassination has become of a definite possibility for Ofeyi because he can imagine the lives saved in the scene being played out before him. However, in place of a maintenance of life, the voices from the church "damned his futility" (196).

This change of thought, which circumstances have helped dictate, poses a problem when Ofeyi meets up with an armed camp of "aliens" (Southerners) hiding in an isolated church in Cross-river state. Experience has made guerillas of these aliens, a fact that would seem to align Ofeyi with their goals: " 'Better to trust in the forest and fight our way through any villages we encounter on the way' " (209-10). And, if the similarity in perspective is not enough, Ahime's presence as guide (210) to these people should influence Ofeyi. Alternatively, he could go with Demakin to secure arms (213) for what remains of Aiyéró's presence in the North. Ofeyi does not go with either group, deciding instead to search for Iriyise because " 'Perhaps deep down I realize that the search would immerse me in the meaning of the event, lead me to a new understanding of history' " (213). What Ofeyi actually means is that Iriyise is the symbol of Aiyéró, and he must rescue her to salvage his vision of a nation built on Aiyéróan foundations. Furthermore, to march back to Aiyéró without Iriyise would be to forego the larger communal vision and thus control. Demakin understands this aspect of Ofeyi's concerns and he specifically relates them to revolutionary political action.

> 'No, I haven't quite changed places with the cocoa-man here, who plucks symbols out of brothels. But we must acknowledge the fact--pimps, whores, thieves, and a thousand other felons are the familiar vanguard of the army of change. When the moment arrives a woman like Iriyise becomes for them a Chantal, a Deborah, torch and standard-bearer, super-mistress of universal insurgence. To abandon such a potential weapon in any struggle is to admit to a lack of foresight. Or imagination' (214).

Concessions are made here by Demakin to Ofeyi's visionary and literary abilities as they apply to revolution. Ofeyi doesn't agree to march with Demakin, but the ground for a unified effort is laid: Demakin has said that his own mind is turned to a "strategy for the future" (214)--an admission to his growth from Ofeyi's teaching.

Ofeyi, too, has learned from Demakin, for while at the Ramath's home, he picks up a gun (240) to help defend Semi-Dozen. Ofeyi instructs Chalil Ramath to "shoot to heal" (246), while he kills too, "Unhesitating[ly]" (247). Violence is transformed into a therapeutic, holy act, where the death of an intruder is a small operation which goes part of the way toward healing a sick society. At this point, Ofeyi in his act of violence (and Soyinka in his literal creation of it) have broken through to Fanon's third phase, a point that James Booth handily summarizes:

> According to Fanon, after the second phase, which as we have seen is marked by nostalgic evocations of traditional life and the 'distress and difficulty' of the divided consciousness, a 'fighting' phase ensues. '. . . the native, after having tried to lose himself in the people and with the people, will on the contrary shake the people ... he turns into an awakener of the people...' (Booth, 147).

The Cartel's "Harvest" continues, with Ofeyi experiencing much of its after-effects through the refugees (259ff). Eventually Ofeyi receives news of Iriyise and a small piece of hope is brought into the narrative; Ofeyi must hurry, however, because she "may be in Temoko . . . either dying or dead" (274).

Temoko prison marks Ofeyi's descent into the underworld, for a sign near the entrance warns: "abandon hope all who enter..."(275). From a bureaucracy (276), through a yard of refugees (283), Ofeyi enters the Lepers' yard and then the death cells (288), and finally reaches Iriyise in the Lunatics' yard (298)--each step in this journey gives more reason for a loss of hope, and for the approach of death. It would appear that Ofeyi's quest has been for naught. The parallel between this scene and Soyinka's own imprisonment is striking--he, too, was housed between the death cells and the madhouse--but we should not overstress Soyinka's own psychic battle, because it was accomplished alone. Here, Ofeyi is with a comatose Iriyise, after having been knocked out by Suberu (a prison trusty), and he must, like Soyinka, resolve a new course of action.

A spore, according to the OED, is either a small reproductive cell, or a resistant form of bacterium. The section title illuminates Ofeyi's new plans by inviting comparison between the man and organic growth. The former, unconscious in prison with Iriyise analogously holds the promise of resistance (survival) and reproductivity (growth). When will they fight back. When will Iriyise recover and assume her full role as the symbol and vanguard of change?

A period of near despair is broken for the imprisoned Ofeyi when Zaccheus appears with the tools of escape (305)--a not so incredible incident, if one remembers the actual events of Soyinka's own imprisonment, where planes were prevented from flying. Now, Ofeyi hopes Suberu will assist him, but Suberu proves obtuse and, unable to respond orally to Ofeyi's pleas for aid, gesticulates and mimes to Ofeyi that Iriyise's "condition was like the egg [the cocoa-pod] and Ofeyi must wait, patiently, for her emergence" (307). The advice is sound and Ofeyi seizes on the analogy between Iriyise awakening and arising from her comatose state in the Cartel's cocoa-pod of a prison, and the awakening of the people, specifically Suberu, to their near coma-like lives under the Cartel: " '...Have we all wasted our time trying to end the deadly exploitation which traps minds like yours in one lifelong indenture to emptiness?' " (309). Seemingly no progress is made with Suberu; he leaves but the cell door is no longer locked and Ramath and the Dentist arrive (310). All escape with Iriyise to begin the long march back to the source of their united strength: Aiyéró. It is a hopeful march because Suberu joins them; Ofeyi has awakened one person, which is a sign of the others to come. Thus, hope has come from an area in which it previously was abandoned (Temoko). In addition to the escape and Suberu's participation in it, the attack on the armory a success (311), and Iriyise, although not vibrant, is alive. Consequently, the life in the forests must be read optimistically as not just the return trek to Aiyéró, but also as the awakening of nature to the revolt against the Cartel's unnatural order. Relatedly, "Ofeyi and Demakin have become 'Spores;' each is a seed that has developed to bear fruit, a single cell that has the capacity to grow and multiply" (102). Ofeyi has resolved the contradiction within and will utilize violence as a carefully controlled means to an end--his visionary, creative sense of a nation based on Aiyéró. He has become, in Iriyise's words, "one of us;" that is, with the people and against the forces of capitalism.

For these reasons Femi Ososifan's criticism ofSoyinka's civil-war writing is difficult to accept:

> Stranded between utopian ideals and a bleak unfulfillment, between the lure of liberty and the reality of repression, our writers have sacrificed poetic élan to the commonplace of political expediency ....[35]

Far from condoning the politically expedient of the moment, Soyinka's novel painstakingly and artfully charts the progression of an individual through a series of choices that arise from an imaginative and inquisitive mind. The relation between organic structure and organic community, as found in the course of Ofeyi's deliberations stress this fact fully, as does the degree of sensitivity and care found in Soyinka's handling of such complex issues as programs of social change:

> The real way to master and transform reality, Soyinka [has argued] is to help liberate the [readers'] minds 'from the superstition of Power which cripples the will, obscures self-apprehension and facilitates surrender to the alienating processes ranged against every form of human productivity' (Crow, 69).

Reality is not yet transformed, but the presence of the Aiyéróan ideal within the forests (and within Nigerian society) marks enough of an awakening for a new social construct, national in scope. Change is posited in this return of men to a 'primitive' environment, where an evolutionary, organic revolution can begin with man in his 'natural' state. Success or failure is left dependent upon the quality and strength of the awakened people's convictions in the symbol that Ofeyi has created in Iriyise, and that Soyinka has created in his novel.

Conclusion

In contrast to Irele's claims, this study has shown that literature is a powerful vehicle of social thought. Some of the works examined may not have achieved the desired clarity of thought, but they have, nonetheless, given expression to the communal visions of five distinct individuals and the readership they represent. Possibilities, conveyed with varying degrees of artistry, are there for scrutiny as well as acceptance, rejection, or adaptation. Above all, the call has been for the populace to get involved and to contribute.

In "Notes from Chile," Ariel Dorfman makes use of a metaphor to describe cultural change as it has taken place, often covertly, under Pinochet's regime. Dorfman's metaphor aptly encompasses the differences in meaning and in effect of Aniebo, Ekwensi, Mezu, Omotoso and Soyinka's communal visions, as evident in their civil war novels. Chile, Dorfman writes,

> ...is in open rebellion against Pinochet. The ferment in the land has intensified the demands on intellectuals and journalists. What used to be sufficient--cultivating a flower-patch in the midst of an apparently barren landscape and trying to make it a permanent

> oasis--is no longer adequate and a furious need has developed for fertility and pollenization.[1]

It is a succinct and metaphorically related expression of Soyinka's purpose in Season of Anomy--an awakening and reclamation of minds that have been lost, that have been emptied of purpose in the futility of struggle against a harsh capitalist regime which brought about Nigeria's fraternal war. Wole Soyinka, so-called elitist, is the only writer dealt with here who speaks to all levels of society. The works of S.O. Mezu and Cyprian Ekwensi, in their idealistic(?) wishes for a better future, stumble at their books' ends, and barely produce "flower-patches." Kole Omotoso and, to a greater extent, I.N.C. Aniebo, maintain their respective gardens, but limit access to specific levels of the hierarchy by addressing concerns primarily to one social group. It is perhaps because of this fact that their works have met with only limited success.[2]

Soyinka, alone, is furiously attempting to fertilize and pollinate the minds of his countrymen. His reflections on society are unique in expression and (in spite of the decolonizers' claims to the contrary) are the only views examined here which incorporate something from Africa's traditions--a pantheon as well as a perspective for the artist--while his actions extend those reflections in directly practical ways to the community. Soyinka's path is by no means an easy one, for it posits a revolution--artistically and politically--and Soyinka himself is mindful of the risks involved. One of those risks is that no one will listen; another is that he will be refused access to his audience[3], but, as with his wartime imprisonment, Soyinka and his writings will retain what Robert Fraser calls

> ...a political potential...galvanized by the war into an instrument of protest aimed less at his personal circumstances than against a deep, almost mystic source of injustice secreting its deadly juices in the body politic. The resultant writing [and actions will be] redeemed from partisanship by Soyinka's instinctual humanism.[4]

We are left with one writer who refuses to undermine the complexity of the tasks and the issues that are to be undertaken and challenged by society. Even Soyinka, though, cannot reach everyone, and his awkward, sometimes obscure expression will limit his audience to those prepared to undergo what Osofisan has called "the challenge of the maze."[5] Thus, a hierarchy develops in the audience of these writers, which begins at a high point with

Soyinka's intellectual rigour and descends through the competent artistry of Omotoso and Aniebo, and finally comes to rest at the level of greatest consumption, minimal artistry and intellectual stimulus.

Whether or not this social hierarchy is reflected in other Nigerian Civil War fiction demands a more extensive study than the present one. We can conclude, tentatively, that the importance of this literature rests in its recognition of the social problems it reflects or scrutinizes, even as it (unwillingly) perpetuates them.

Growth in Nigeria's national literature has come most profoundly from the descendants of the early Onitsha pamphlets, Macmillan's Pacesetter series. Virgina Coulon's excellent essay on this series indicates their worth.[6] Coulon's most significant findings are that the Pacesetters reflect "the morality of Onitsha publications which aim to entertain as well as instruct" (309). Yet, Pacesetters have outgrown their Onitsha "parents" because "the authors...are...national writers. Everything in their works proclaims, defends, and upholds the idea of an inviolable Nigerian nation" (311). Furthermore, the authors "cannot help but feel pride in their country's abilities to solve its own problems, using its own technical achievements and its own human resources" (315). And, to solve the problem of communal schisms the

Pacesetters "suggest that the country has nothing to gain from belaboring the issues or reliving the events that led it to near rupture in a brutal civil war" (317). Because "Pacesetters are widely distributed in Nigeria--and widely read..." (318), a truly national consciousness will be created that transcends ethnic or social boundaries. With the more solidified national foundation that Pacesetters offer, perhaps readers will feel secure enough to cross the tribal lines of the civil war to read about the war from diverse perspectives. Then and only then will the imagined community that ultimately enters readers' minds in its utopian form come closer to their grasp. Frantz Fanon underscores this primary lesson elecited from the past that remains applicable to the future. In "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness" Fanon writes:

> *Nationalism is but a stage in the process of full participation in a society by its entire populace. But, nationalism must take place before social or political consciousness, otherwise the latter two will be tribally oriented.*[7]

For now, Nigerian literature, from the collective local solidarity of Onitsha (Coulon, 304) through the diverse, but class and tribal oriented diversity of the Biafran War (where "the overt political temper of the bulk of the literature...must be seen as an attempt by Nigerian writers to reestablish their moral committment to the evolution of their country ")[8], to the nationalism of the Pacesetters, has shown growth, development and originality. This distinctively Nigerian tradition emphasizes that the seekers of an imagined Nigerian community have their foundation. It is now up to other seekers to build upon it.

NOTES

Introduction

[1] Eldred Durosimi Jones, "Editorial", African Literature Today, 13 (1983) viii.

[2] Ian McEwan, "An Interview with Milan Kundera", Granta 11 (1984) 34, 37.

[3] Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities (London: New Left Books, 1983) 40.

[4] Abiola Irele, "The Season of a Mind: Wole Soyinka and the Nigerian Crisis," The African Experience in Literature and Ideology by Irele (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1981) 210.

[5] Chinua Achebe, "The African Writer and the English Language," Morning Yet on Creation Day by Achebe (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1981) 59.

[6] Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa Jemie and Ihechukwu Madubuike, Toward the Decolonization of African Literature, Vol.1, (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1983) 13, their stress.

[7] Quoted in Marxism and Art, ed. Maynard Solomon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1979) 65.

[8] Emmanuel Obiechina, Onitsha Market Literature (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1972) 10.

[9] Don Dodson, "The Role of the Publisher in Onitsha Market Literature," Critical Perspectives on Nigerian Literatures, ed. Bernth Lindfors (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1976) 195-213.

[10] These figures are for Heinemann editions only. Vicky Unwin, the publisher of African and Caribbean literature for Heinemann, generously provided sales figures in response to a questionnaire. No other publishers I approached have done so.

[11] J. P. O'Flinn, "Towards a Sociology of the African Novel," African Literature Today, 7 (1975) 34.

[12] Elechi Amadi, Estrangement (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1986) 109.

[13] Chinua Achebe, The Trouble with Nigeria (Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publ. Co. Ltd., 1983) 5.

[14] Elechi Amadi, Sunset in Biafra (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1978) 183-84.

[15] Marxist terminology, although prevalent in contemporary literary criticism, requires cautious use in relation to Africa because of the different historical, cultural and political circumstances that exist there. "Class," for instance, embodies the influences of tribalism in Nigeria; whereas, it does not in the societies of which Marx wrote.

Chapter One

[1] Walter Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa (Washington, D. C.: Howard University Press, 1982) 278. References will be made parenthetically within the text unless an endnote is used.

[2] Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (1983; London: Verso, 1985) 107.

[3] Bernth Lindfors, "Postwar Popular Literature in Nigeria," Okike 9 (1975) 52.

[4] Sales statistics were provided by Heinemann publisher Vicky Unwin. It is of interest that the educated Omotoso has failed to match Ekwensi's popular success. Sales figures for Omotoso's The Edifice and The Combat show that his popularity peaks at about 10,000 copies per work, whereas Ekwensi's works rarely sell less than 40,000 copies each.

[5] Ian Bell, "Patter-Merchants and Chancers," Planet: the Welsh Internationalist 60 (Dec./Jan. 1986-87) 43.

[6] Stanley Macebuh, "Poetics and the Mythic Imagination," Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka, ed. James Gibbs (19080; London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1981) 206.

[7] Kole Omotoso, The Combat (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books, Ltd., 1972).

[8] F. Odun Balogun, in "Populist Fiction: Omotoso's Novels," African Literature Today 13 (1983), indicates that in the early short-story, "Isaac," which was the genesis for part of The Combat, the car was "significantly" a Mercedes Benz Sports. There is, as Balogun suggests, a stronger social comment made if a Mercedes kills Isaac. However, Omotoso's choice of a "lesser" car in the novel provides a realistic point of identity for the projected populist readership. It actively implicates them in the death because the car's make prevents blame being placed on the upper stratum of society.

As a side note, The Combat is also based on "Nightmares of an Arch-Rebel" (see Dem Say: Interviews with Eight Nigerian Writers (Occasional Publication, 9), ed. Bernth Lindfors (Austin, Texas: African and Afro-American Studies and Research Centre, 1974) 53. I cannot comment on either short-story nor their relevance; copies have so far been impossible to locate.

[9] Dieter Riemenschneider, "The Biafra War in Nigerian Literature," Jaw-bones and umbilical cords, ed. Ulla Schild (Berlin: D. Reimer Verlag, 1985) 84.

[10] Unrealized characterization and an over-concentration of ideas makes Mazrui's The Trial of Christopher Okigbo (1971) an impersonal narrative with a strong, but unrealized social potential.

[11] Earlier, Omotoso foreshadowed failure and the inevitable conflict by inserting a mental cue: "The military leaders of Nigeria had been meeting in Aburi, Ghana, in an attempt to find a peaceful solution to the problems of the country... the news reader was saying...the first shots were being fired and there was now Biafra." (12)

[12] Gowon's agreement to all of Ojukwu's demands at the Aburi Governors' conference is reflected here; after the agreements were made neither man stuck to them, both sides refused to compromise. See N. U. Akpan, The Struggle for Secession 1966-1970, 2nd ed. (1971; London: Frank Cass, 1976) 47ff.

[13] Adewale Ademoyega, Why We struck: The Story of the First Nigerian Coup (Ibadan: Evans Bros. Ltd., 1981) 192, my stress.

[14] The idea that Omotoso is condescending gains credence when he describes the working man at thought: Chuku Debe "...underwent an agony of mental cogitation. By the time he had finished he was sweating..." (The Combat, 49). Wole Soyinka, a so-called elitist in African literature, has, as we shall later see, an enormous respect for the intelligence of all people who attend to his works.

[15] F. Odun Bologun lists some additional problems in the text (see Balogun, 121, note 6). Somewhat disconcertingly, Balogun agrees that the technical and stylistic errors are not prone to occur in "locally published works" alone, but also occur in works "published abroad." The point is disconcerting because Balogun never criticizes Omotoso for poor proof-reading (which impeded the clarity of communication he desires); instead, Balogun defends Nigerian printers from an apparent slur.

[16] Cyprian Ekwensi, Survive the Peace (London, Ibadan, Nairobi and Lusaka: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1976).

[17] See Dennis Duerden and Cosmo Pieterse, eds., African Writers Talking: A Collection of Interviews, 2nd ed. (1972; London, Ibadan, Nairobi and Lusaka: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1975) 80.

[18] Margaret Laurence, Long Drums and Canons (London: Macmillan, 1968) 148-49. See also Chidi Amuta, "The Nigerian Civil War and the Evolution of Nigerian Literature," in Contemporary African Literature, ed. Hal Wylie et al (Washington, D. C.: Three Continents Press, 1983): "In Iska and Jagua Nana respectively, Ekwensi illustrates the effects of aggressive ethnic politics on the life of individuals and proposed greater ethnic tolerance in the nation." (87).

[19] Charles Larson, "Long Shadows of the Biafran War," Nation (Enugu) 3 (Dec. 1973) 600: "Ekwensi spent much of his time outside of Africa, trying to rally support for the Biafran cause."

[20] Ekwensi wrote "a 204,000 word" (Dem Say, 29) novel during the war -- "Africhaos." This novel was published as Divided We

Stand (Enugu: Fourth Dimension, 1980). It is the "companion volume" to Survive the Peace (see "Cyprian Ekwensi," interview with Raoul Granqvist, Kunapipi 4, 1 (1982) 125). Divided We stand will not be discussed here, for it is the weaker of the two books, bordering more on reportage (description) than fiction (creation).

[21] Rosemary Colmer, "Cyprian Ekwensi," in Essays on contemporary and post-colonial fiction, eds. Hedwig Bock and Albert Wetheim (Munchen: Heuber, 1986) 62.

[22] Willfried Feuser summarizes the plot in much the same way: " a reluctant quest for the lost home and a dirge on the frailty of human relationships." See "Anomy and Beyond: Nigeria's Civil War in Literature," Presence African (n.b.s.) 137-138 (1st and 2nd quarterlies, 1986) 142.

[23] Benedict Anderson, in Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, points out that the use of English gave access to European models of nationalism (107) and that "advances in communications technology, especially radio and television, give print allies," which, if used in multilingual broadcasts "can conjure up the imagined community to illiterates and populations with different mother tongues." (123). Anderson goes on to say: "It is no less striking a sign of colonial-school-generated nationalism that over Radio Kaduna [the rebel leader Major Nzeogwu] assured his countrymen that "you will no more be ashamed to say that you are Nigerian" (110,n). Odugo, in his role as a journalist for a state run radio, is operating at the core of Biafran nationalist activities.

[24] There is no doubt that after the killings of Igbos in the Sabongaris in the North (in May and July 1966) that there was reason to fear random killing by the federal forces at the war's close. Ojukwu, in his anti-Nigerian nationalism perpetuated, both in Biafra and internationally, the myth of genocide to obtain military, economic and moral support. For further elaboration of this point see N.U.Akpan, The Struggle of Secession 1966-1970. Frederick Forsyth supports the idea that Nigeria had planned mass killings of the Igbos. See "Chapter 13, The Question of Genocide" in The Making of an African Legend: The Biafra Story (Harmondsworth: Penquin, 1977) 256-69.

[25] Pa Ukoha's thoughts about when his children will return (51), and the arrival of a dead son -- Samson -- permit Ekwensi to depict a forgotten (during the war) communal ritual: a burial

and a wake (54). The village participation, and the "leisurely" pace of the burial emphasize the cultural homogenity of this older social order. Ekwensi has returned to origins, to a place where the social processes can begin anew: in the birth of children and in death.

[26] See Peter Nazareth, "Survive the Peace: Cyprian Ekwensi as a Political Novelist," in Marxism and African Literature, ed. Georg M. Gugelberger (Trenton, N. J.: Africa World Press, Inc., 1986) 171, for another account of the emancipation of woman.

[27] In a related discussion with Pa Ukoha, Odugo disclaims responsibility for what he reports, but, on hearing Ukoha's response--"You are a disappointed man" (59)--Odugo becomes introspective. This capacity for reflection about himself and others raises Odugo above the "self-centered" label that is appended to him.

[28] Pa Ukoha's view develops into one which reflects Captain's position fully when his son Samson's body is brought home (77-8). This union of old values with youthful, skepticism and energy is an alternative community, ready for implementation and development.

[29] The question of road safety is reiterated on pages 80, 107, and 168. The inability to use roads (a means of communication) inhibits the restructuring of a larger community.

[30] See, for example, Margaret Laurence, 168; or, Douglas Killam, "Cyprian Ekwensi," in Introduction to Nigerian Literature, ed. Bruce King (1971; London and Lagos: Evans Brothers and the University of Lagos Press, 1974) 95.

[31] Eustace Palmer, An Introduction to the African Novel (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1972) xi.

Chapter Two

[1] Chidi Amuta, "History, Society and Heroism in the Nigerian War Novel," Kunapipi 6, 3 (1984) 61.

[2] Georg Lukacs, "Second Conversation, Georg Lukacs--Leo Kofler: Society and the Individual," in Conversations with Lukacs, ed. Theo Pinkus, trans. Hans Heinz Holz and Theo Pinkus (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1975) 49.

[3] Frederick Forsyth, The Making of an African Legend: The Biafra Story (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1977) 98.

[4] General C. Odumegwu Ojukwa. Principles of the Biafran Revolution (Cambridge, Mass.: The Biafra Review, 1969)6.

[5] S. Okechukwu Mezu, "Poetry and Revolution in Modern Africa." African Writers on African Writing, ed. G. D. Killam (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1973) 105. Mezu's use of the all-inclusive "we" identifies the fact that the views he expresses apply to himself as well as to others.

[6] The dedication, "to all the innocent victims of the Biafran War," is partisan because of Mezu's use of the politically loaded label--Biafran--as opposed to Nigerian Civil War. He is, after all, writing in the post-Biafran period. Similarly the East and Mid-West regions were the only ones seriously affected by the war--as Ekwensi and others have related. Building continued in the Western Region--so "innocent victims" limits itself to less than the Nigerian whole. Conversely, "behind" refers to all that took place in Biafra (the rising sun), while the epigraph from Maran's Batoula explicitly offers an account that is "entirely objective."

[7] S. O. Mezu, Behind the Rising Sun (London, Ibadan, Nairobi and Lusaka: Heinemann, 1971) 229.

[8] Mezu creates a character who reflects a point that is familiar to readers of Flora Nwapa's Never Again (Enugu: Nwamife Publ. Ltd., 1975), another lightly "fictionalized" memoir, wherein criticism is made "under one's breath". See, for instance, page 11; or, the combined strength of a majority within Biafra squashes the independent voice (17). The divisiveness within Nwapa's Biafra also reiterates a common civil war literary theme: the possibility of inter-Biafran fighting (50).

[9] Mezu is building Onuoha's character in a similar way to Shakespeare's heightening of Prince Hal's stature, in Henry IV, 1, through the assumption of the defeated Hotspur's reputation. Onuoha's reputation remains empty, unfulfilled, as he has not acted even once: it is Nwoke who returns to Biafra, not Onuoha in his place.

[10] Juliet I. Okonkwo, "Biafran War Novels--A Review", Nsukka Studies in African Literature 4 (Enugu: Fourth Dimension, Jan. 1986) 166.

[11] This idea is supported by a reading of other civil war fiction.

Most notably, in Nwapa's Never Again: "Their home had been rid of the Vandals [i.e., Nigerians]. That was all that mattered to them" (79). People ultimately do not care about Nigeria, Biafra, or any other imagined community; they want their family home, to retain the unbroken lineage with their ancestors as Czeslaw Milosz ironically states: "Nations come and go, but the countries remain," The Captive Mind, trans. Jane Zielonko (New York: Vintage, 1981) 230.

[12] For a discussion of the real Lavignette and Fresco, see Forsyth's relation of Hank Wharton's activities (200, 207, 250 and 284).

[13] Freddie Onuoha's goals are compatible to those of Pa Ukoha and Captain in Survive the Peace, but he offers no means whereby the goals may be achieved.

[14] The use of "people" and "they" identify two groups with which Edu, Okeji and Onuoha do not immediately identify: the ruling group and the workers. Consequently, there is validity to our use of bourgeois to describe this novel's perspective.

[15] Onuoha's unconcern about the French Secret Service's surveillance of him is a prime example of his uncritical middle-class patriarchy that he, Edu and Okeji desire: "Onouha had not worried about the [surveillance] too much, since as far as he knew, they were not planning to overthrow the French Government. Besides, the host government had a right to find out what foreigners were doing on its territory" (63).

Similarly, the pedantic description of the traffic jam (66), followed by the woman taking Onuoha's parking space (68) are "little adventures" (68) of no consequence but relished by Onuoha and Mezu, indicating the bourgeois milieu of the text.

[16] The attitude is reasserted in Senegal, where Onuoha stays clear of the rioting, except where he can practically assist Biafran students.

[17] Lawyer Afoukwa, who is with them, is a member of the squad, and therefore cannot be included in the oha.

[18] Mezu's repeated use of the term "arrondisement" is also a middle class affection: displaying one's knowledge of other languages/cultures not to elucidate meaning, but merely to impress. Other examples abound, but perhaps the most peculiar self-indictment is the following:

> The Denver Pass in Colorado, even if it surpasses it in height, cannot be compared to the treacherous splendour of the Miliking Hill. Before colonial times, few if any ever returned from the Miliking Hill, a type of Oracle (177).

[19] Ebo, in Nwapa's "Wives at War", *Wives at War* (Enugu: Tana Press, 1984, 2nd ed) 9, is more despicable, for *he* loads his entire family into a plane and departs. Nwapa's collection of stories, while commendable in its concentration on women's roles in the war, is weak in the portrayal of woman.

[20] They don't so much gain increasing respect as Afoukwa loses it completely. Hence, there is a widening in the scale of our judgement, which gives the appearance of an increase.

[21] Stressing "Nigerian" in this way permits Mezu to effectively forestall the individual reader from interiorizing the negative actions as components of the self. One does not want to be evil, therefore the actions are a Nigerian's, not one's own. Omotoso in *The Combat*, does not clearly identify which protagonist reflects which side in the war (the imperial powers would have sided with either group), thus permitting the reader to view issues and explore one's relationship to them. As will be seen, Aniebo's "phantom" Nigerians work to the same end as Omotoso's protagonists.

[22] Willfried Feuser offers support for this interpretation by locating Mezu's renewed social vision in "Ojukwu's Ahiara Declaration" of June 1, 1969. See "Anomy and Beyond: Nigeria's Civil War in Literature", *Presence African* (n.b.s.)137-138, 1st and 2nd Quarterlies (1986) 141.

[23] Mezu's decision to provide a witness' account is a contributing factor in Onuoha's ineffectiveness: full engagement in the new communal process, in part, would prevent movement and observation. The scope of the novel is therefore a root cause in its failure. A more successful example of pro-Biafran fiction is Frederick Forsyth's *The Dogs of War* (London: Hutchinson, 1974). Forsyth begins with a factual description of Ojukwa leaving Biafra, and then offers his perspective on how the Biafran exiles could acquire a country of their own.

[24] While serving Biafra as a soldier, Aniebo was also involved with Achebe and Okigbo's short-lived publishing company. See *Wanasema: Conversations with African Writers* (Monographs in

International Studies, Africa Series, No. 46), ed. Don Burness (Athens, Ohio: Ohio Center for African Studies, 1985) 31.

[25] The Anonymity of Sacrifice (London, Ibadan, Nairobi and Lusaka: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1974. The short stories, "A Hero's Welcome" and "In the Front Line", have been collected by Willfried Feuser in Of Wives, Talismans and the Dead (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1983), pp. 120-32 and 109-19 respectively. "A Hero's Welcome" explores complex familial relationships, within a war setting, that result in infanticide. "In the Front Line" resembles Ekwensi's Survive the Peace in the examination of relationships and sexual mores during the war.

[26] It will be remembered that Omotoso uses a similar narrative device, but in a restricted way: when he requires a freer hand at points within his narrative to satirize the South Africans and the Soviets. Omotoso uses the nature of each protagonist (through their perspectives) as a means of achieving the satire. Aniebo's purpose is not outward but inward, in an attempt to reveal the nature of each man.

[27] See, respectively, R. D. Lainy, The Politics of Experience and the Bird of Paradise (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967) 24; and Georg Lukacs, The Historical Novel (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981) 305.

[28] It is of interest to note that Aniebo's move to make the reader a witness, through participation in piecing together the dialogue, stands in direct contrast to the reader's relative passivity in the received monologue of Mezu's scenario.

[29] Significantly, Cyril Agumo's fantasies about becoming an officer are fraught with such dangers:

> He just saw himself in the uniform [of an officer], standing there proudly and looking handsome, dashing and disdainful. Not once had he ever thought what he would do when he got into the uniform...(30).

The positiion is outside the realm of his experience and knowledge; he is not trained for the role.

[30] Dieter Riiemenschneider, "The Biafra War in Nigerian Litera-

ture", Jaw-bones and umbilical cords, ed. Ulla Schild (Verlag: D. Reimer Verlag, 1985) 80.

Chapter Three

[1] Wole Soyinka, Season of Anomy (Walton-on-Thames, Surrey: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1980).

[2] The Man Died: prison notes of Wole Soyinka (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1979).

[3] Myth, Literature and the African World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

[4] See Ezekiel Mphahlele, Lewis Nkosi and Dennis Duerden, "Wole Soyinka," in African Writers Talking, eds. Dennis Duerden and Cosmo Pieterse (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1972) 169-80.

[5] See, for example, Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa Jemie and Ihechukwu Madubuike, Toward the Decolonization of African Literature, 1 (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1983) 170-82, 217-25, 234-38, on Soyinka's poetry. They claim that Soyinka's is "a suicidal eurocentric, individualist, pseudo-universalist consciousness" (238). The original debate between Soyinka and the decolonizers was conducted in the pages of Transition; for a descriptive summary see Peter Benson, BLACK ORPHEUS, TRANSITION, and Modern Cultural Awakening in Africa (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986) 272-78.

[6] Stanley Macebuh, "Poetics and the Mythic Imagination," Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka, ed. James Gibbs (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1981) 200-12.

[7] This type of assessment of Soyinka's work has recently been made by David Cook, in "The Potentially Popular Playwright, in Before Our Very Eyes[:] Tribute to Wole Soyinka, ed. Dapo Adelugba (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd., 1987) 89-103. Cook writes that if Soyinka's plays "have seldom met with public acclaim, this...is...because they have not been vigorously and sensibly presented, in the popular theatre..."(89).

[8] Wole Soyinka, "The Failure of the Writer in Africa," in The

Africa Reader: Independent Africa, eds. Wilfred Cartey and Martin Kilson (New York: Random House, 1970) 135-42. This essay was reworked from a shorter form presented at the 1967 African-Scandinavian Writers' Conference: see Wole Soyinka, "The Writer in a modern African state," in *The Writer in Modern Africa*, ed. Per Wastberg (New York: Africana Publ. Co. Ltd., 1969) 14-21. The latter version is reproduced in *When the Man Died*, ed. John Agetua (Benin City: John Agetua, 1975) 25-30.

[9] Ngugi wa Thiong'o, in *Decolonizing the Mind The Politics of Language in African Literature* (London: James Currey, 1986), shares Soyinka's opinion here, but extends the point. In the neo-colonial period, writers began criticizing and evaluating those societies (21), but did so "within the confines of the languages of Europe..." (21). The continued use of colonial languages prevented communication with the masses, and so the writer felt alienated, speaking "as if its own identity or the crisis of its own identity was that of society as a whole" (22). Soyinka fails to note this point, but his literary works are, in part, addressed to the neo-colonial governing classes: a direct attack at the problem's immediate source.

[10] See Ketu H. Katrak, "Yoruba Ritual, Myth, and "The Fourth Stage:" Soyinka, Neitzsche, and Brecht--A Paradigm for Yorbua Tragedy," in *Wole Soyinka and Modern Tragedy* by Katrak (New York, Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 1986) 17-58, for a useful commentary on Soyinka's metaphysics/aesthetics.

[11] See Joel Adedeji, "Aesthetics of Soyinka's Theatre," in *Before Our Very Eyes*, 104-31: "For Soyinka, the purpose of the theatre is to impart experiences, not to provide 'meaning' or 'moral;' to set a riddle, not to tell a story" (105). Ketu H. Katrak, somewhat similarly, asserts that the "ritual actor and the protagonist in Yoruba tragedy modelled on Ogun self-consciously enact a role for a communal purpose..."(55). Michael Etherton further notes that Soyinka's 'Tragic understanding'...is concerned with the survival of the community and not specifically the survival of any one individual," *The Development of African Drama* (London: Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., 1982) 244.

[12] Wole Soyinka, "Drama and the Revolutionary Ideal," *In Person: Achebe, Awoonor and Soyinka*, ed. Karen L. Morell (Seattle: Institute of Comparative and Foreign Area Studies, University of Washington, 1975) 61-88.

[13] See Wole Soyinka, Aké: the Years of Childhood (New York: Aventura, 1983) especially, 177-86, 192-222. In addition to the appropriated art (i.e. the oro song), Soyinka's artistic rendition of his childhood also presents subsequent generations with an incitement to action as well as a vision to follow.

[14] This is ignoring the fact that the autobiography was written some 30-35 years after the event, time in which the matured artist has developed his aesthetics and can therefore 'parachute' them back into history to suggest some form of artistic continuity.

[15] This item and those that follow have been gleaned from the works of Soyinka's commentators, particularly the chronology by James Gibbs in the "Introduction" to his Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka, 11.

[16] James Gibbs, Wole Soyinka (New York: Grove Press, 1986) 8. John Mortimer, at the request of Amnesty International, attended Soyinka's trial as an observer. See Clinging to the Wreckage (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1985) 195-200. A Mr. Oshin, an employee of the radio station recognized the gunman as Wole Soyinka (197), yet, contradictorily, "None of the witnesses identified Wole Soyinka satisfactorily and he was acquitted" (199).

[17] "Of Power and Change," African Statesman (Lagos) 1, 3(July-September 1966) 17-19; "Let's Think Again About the Aftermath of this War," Nigerian Daily Sketch (Lagos) 4 August 1967, 8.

[18] "Harvest of Hate," "Ikeja, Friday, Four O'Clock," "Massacre October '66," "Civilian and Soldier," "For Fajuyi," "Malediction," in Idanre and Other Poems (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1967) 49-55.

[19] General Olusegun Obasanjo suggests a greater political role for Soyinka: "a celebrated playwright who was acting for and on behalf of Victor Banjo." Quoted from My Command: An Account of the Nigerian Civil War (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1981) 31. According to Obasanjo, Soyinka offered "covert support for the rebels," and tried to convince Obasanjo to give Banjo "unhindered access to Ibadan and Lagos at any price" (31). Obasanjo turned down the request.

[20] Obasanjo is more pessimistic when he asserts that there was a "grand design that would eliminate Ojukwu and depose Gowon

leaving the leadership of Nigeria free for the picking" (Obasanjo, 31).

[21] Adamu Ciroma"Review--The Man Died" in When the Man Died, 11. See also Iyorwuese Hagher: "...a very bad book...a private grudge...barefaced propaganda..."(12); Dan Izevbaye: "Soyinka's determined and calculated attempt to hit back at those who dared to imprison him" (13); Chief Sobo Sowemimo: "The Man Died is a vulgar book written by a chatty and garrulous author who has no iota of respect for truth. In short it reads like the ramblings of a demented playwright" (23).

[22] "Ten Years After," The Man Died: prison notes of Wole Soyinka (London: Arrow Books Ltd., 1985) xxiii.

[23] "Poems from Prison" (London: Rex Collings, 1969; rpt., 1981). The poems are "Live Burial" and "Flowers for my Land." Both are reproduced in A Shuttle in the Crypt (London: Rex Collings/Eyre Methuen, 1972; rpt., 1977) 60-65. In the collection, "Live Burial" has some changes in punctuation and four additional stanzas on individual prison guards at Kaduna Prison. The original, shorter poem is the better for its conciseness and more general tone of condemnation. "Flowers for My Land" is also extended in Shuttle by four stanzas, with vocabulary and punctuation changes. The changes emphasize communal solidarity, but warn of others who may "press to full/Possession," and not "make common cause." Thus there is a development of the communal ideal and the dangers it faces--thematic additions which enhance the revised version.

[24] Much of what I have to say on "Poems from Prison" would be repeated in a discussion of A Shuttle in the Crypt; thus, for reasons of space I will not examine the poems in that collection further. Instead, I will quote from the wonderfully precise remarks of Femi Osofisan (see "The Quality of Hurt--A Survey of Recent Nigerian Poetry, Part One," Afriscope 4, 7 (1974) 45-8, 51-3) as the definitive word on that collection. In Shuttle, he remarks:

> ...you would notice...the same tortured world as of The Man Died, except that where the prose from [sic] encouraged the output of anguish till it sometimes became strident, the poetic form has disciplined the hurt with a far more passionate intensity. [Further, Soyinka] ...the archpriest of wanton obscurity is a complex and mingled mind perennially lost in the maze of

> his own private confused mythology. ...Nevertheless, such is the profundity of Soyinka's thought and experience, so penetrating is his vision, that we cannot but face the challenge of the maze. And it is surprising how, when we once summon the courage and willingness to understand, most of Soyinka's preliminary 'obscurity' disappears (51,48).

[25] This interweaving of literal and metaphoric meaning is more fully developed in Season of Anomy.

[26] Abiola Irele, "The Season of a Mind: Wole Soyinka and the Nigerian Crisis," in The African Experience in Literature and Ideology by Irele (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1981) 210.

[27] James Booth, Writers and Politics in Nigeria (London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1981) 148.

[28] Emmanuel Ngara, Stylistic Criticism and the African Novel (London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1982) 99.

[29] Geoffrey Hunt, "Two African Aesthetics: Wole Soyinka vs Amilcar Cabral," in Marxism and African Literature, ed. Georg M. Gugelberger (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1985) 74.

[30] Gerald Moore, Wole Soyinka, 2nd ed. (London: Evans Brothers Ltd., 1978) 134.

[31] Brian Crow, "Soyinka and his Radical Critics: A Review," Theatre Research International 12, 1 (Spring 1987) 66.

[32] The good and the evil to be found within the same part of nature is a recurrent theme in Soyinka's work. Iya Agba, an earth mother, in the post-civil war play, Madmen and Specialists, in Six Plays by Soyinka (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1984), raises this point: "Poison has its uses too. You can cure with poison if you use it right. Or kill" (233). Ketu H. Katrak relates this point to Soyinka's aesthetics in the following way: "Soyinka's conception of tragedy touches on two aspects of Yoruba moral order. First, the coexistence of good and evil....is manifested...through parallels [to] Ogun's dual nature.... Second, moral order is integrally connected to natural process . . ." (38). Hence, Soyinka's use of "Harvest" as a sectional title has an underlying irony, in that this natural process becomes evil

in the hands of the power-brokers; the world's orderliness in nature is upset, as in Macbeth.

[33] Ofeyi is much less of an abstraction now, and his subsequent acts will determine himself and society:

> Contrary to the gods' controlling [the] resolutions..., in Soyinka's [works we find] tragic protagonists who must undergo severe trails and tests of their human will for survival, and who must try to emerge out of the tragic suffering through the strength of that same will. Granted that this human being is an exceptional individual, granted also that the breath of Ogun steadily and quietly inspires his actions [Aiyéró grants "Ogun pride of place," Season, 13]; nonetheless, the final resolution is in the hands of human agents--the characters on stage who surround the protagonist and influence his actions, the social environment which has a critical impact on the protagonist's psyche, and his own inner strength which enables him to survive or to succumb to the rigors of the tragic experience (Katrak, 34).

[34] Several critics, Ennanuel Ngara among them (see Ngara, 108), note the symbolic relationship between Ofeyi's quest for Iriyise and Orpheus' descent into the Underworld for Eurydice.

[35] Femi Osofisan, "Anubis resurgent: chaos and political vision in recent literature," Ch'indaba 2 (July/Dec. 1976) 47.

Conclusion

[1] Ariel Dorfman, "Notes from Chile," Granta 11 (1984) 238.

[2] Aniebo's The Anonymity of Sacrifice had sold 8781 copies when it went out of print.

[3] In addition to his detention, Soyinka has lost access to his audience through government censorship (The Man Died, Lagos University Press edition was banned) and harassment; e.g., an Opera Wonyosi performance was cancelled at the National Theatre in Lagos). See James Gibbs, "Wole Soyinka," Index on Censorship 3 (1984) back cover, 42-44.

[4] Robert Fraser, "Chapter 10: The poet and war, 1966-70," in West African Poetry: A Critical History (Cambridge at the University Press, 1986) 269.

[5] Femi Osofisan, "The Quality of Hurt--A Survey of Recent Nigerian Poetry, Part One, "Afriscope 4, 7 (1974) 48.

[6] Virginia Coulon, "Onitsha Goes National: Nigerian Writing in Macmillan's Pacesetter Series," Research in African Literatures 18,3 (Fall 1987) 304-19.

[7] Frantz Fanon, "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness," in The Wretched of the Earth by Fanon. Trans. by Constance Farrington. Introd. Jean-Paul Sartre. (New York: Grove Press Inc., 1968) 203, his stress.

[8] Chidi Amuta, "The Ideological Content of Soyinka's War Writings," African Studies Review 29, 3 (Sept. 1986) 45.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Texts

Amadi, Elechi. Estrangement. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1986.

Aniebo, I.N.C. The Anonymity of Sacrifice. London, Ibaban, Nairobi and Lusaka: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1974.

Aniebo, I.N.C. "A Hero's Welcome" and "In the Front Line," in Of Wives, Talismans and the Dead, collected by Willfried Feuser. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd. 1983, pp. 120-32 and 109-19 respectively.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. Survive the Peace. London, Ibadan, Nairobi and Lusaka: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1976.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. Divided We Stand. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publ. Co., 1980.

Mezu, S.O. Behind the Rising Sun. London, Ibadan, Nairobi and Lusaka: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1971.

Mezu, S. Okechukwu. "Poetry and Revolution in Modern Africa."In African Writers on African Writing. Ed. G. D. Killam. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1973.

Omotoso, Kole. The Combat. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1972.

Soyinka, Wole. Season of Anomy. Walton-on-Thames, Surrey: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1980.

Soyinka, Wole. The Man Died: prison notes of Wole Soyinka. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1979.

Soyinka, Wole, "Ten Years After." In his The Man Died; prison notes of Wole Soyinka. London: Arrow Books Ltd., 1985, pp. vii-xxiii.

Soyinka, Wole. Madmen and Specialists. In his Six Plays. London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1984, pp. 221-93.

Soyinka, Wole. "Harvest of Hate," "Ikeja, Friday, Four O'Clock," "Massacre October '66," "Civilian and Soldier," "For Fajuyi" and "Malediction." In his *Idanre and Other Poems*. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1967, pp. 49-55.

Soyinka, Wole. "Poems from Prison." London: Rex Collings Ltd., 1969; rpt. 1981. Rpt. in his *A Shuttle in the Crypt*. London: Rex Collings/Eyre Methuen, 1972; rpt. 1977, pp. 60-65.

Soyinka, Wole. *Aké: the Years of Childhood*. New York: Aventura, 1983.

Soyinka, Wole. *Myth, Literature and the African World*. Cambridge at the University Press, 1979.

Soyinka, Wole, "Of Power and Change." *African Statesman* (Lagos) 1, 3 (July-September 1966), pp. 17-19.

Soyinka, Wole. "Let's Think Again About the Aftermath of this War." *Nigerian Daily Sketch* (Lagos), 4 August 1967, p.8

Soyinka, Wole. "The Failure of the Writer in Africa." In Wilfred Cartey and Martin Kilson, eds. *The Africa Reader: Independent Africa*. New York: Random House, 1970, pp. 135-42.

Soyinka, Wole. "The Writer in a modern African state." In *The Writer in Modern Africa*. Ed. Per Wastberg. New York: Africana Publ. Co. Ltd., 1969, pp. 14-21. Rpt. in *When the Man Died*: *views, reviews and interviews*. Ed. John Agetua. Benin City: John Agetua, 1975, pp. 25-30.

Soyinka, Wole. "Drama and the Revolutionary Ideal." In *Person: Achebe, Awoonor and Soyinka*. Ed. Karen L. Morell. Seattle: Institute of Comparative and Foreign Area Studies, University of Washington, 1975, pp. 61-88.

Soyinka, Wole. "The critic and society: Barthes, leftocracy and other mythologies." In *Black Literature and Literary Theory*. Ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. London and New York: Methuen and Co. Ltd. and Methuen, Inc. 1984, pp. 27-57.

Interviews

Burness, Don and Mary-Lou, eds. Wanasema: Conversations with African Writers, (Monographs in International Studies, Africa Series, No. 46). Athens, Ohio: Ohio Centre for African Studies, 1985. [Amadi, Aniebo].

Duerden, Dennis and Cosmo Pieterse, eds. African Writers Talking: a collection of interviews. 2nd ed. London, Ibadan, Nairobi and Lusaka: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1975. [Ekwensi, Soyinka].

Granqvist, Raoul. "Cyprian Ekwensi." Kunapipi 4, 1 (1982), pp. 124-29.

Lindfors, Bernth, ed. Dem-Say: Interviews with Eight Nigerian Writers. (Occasional Publication, No. 9, Afro-American Studies and Research Centre). Austin, Texas: African and Afro-American Studies and Research Centre, 1974. [Ekwensi, Omotoso].

Secondary Texts

Achebe, Chinua. Girls at War and Other Stories. 2nd ed. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1977.

Achebe, Chinua. The Trouble with Nigeria. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publ. Co. Ltd., 1983.

Achebe, Chinua. "The African Writer and the English Language." In his Morning Yet on Creation Day. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1981, pp. 55-62.

Achebe, Chinua. "The African Writer and the Biafran Cause." In his Morning Yet on Creation Day. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1981, pp. 77-84.

Adedeji, Joel. "Aesthetics of Soyinka's Theatre." In Before Our Very Eyes[:] Tribute to Wole Soyinka. Ed. Dapo Adelugba. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd., 1987, pp. 104-31.

Ademoyega, Adewale. *Why We Struck: The Story of the First Nigerian Coup*. Ibadan: Evans Brothers Ltd., 1981.

Akpan, N. U. *The Struggle for Secession 1966-1970*. 2nd ed. London: Frank Cass, 1976.

Allen, Chris and Gavin Williams, eds. *Sub-Saharan Africa*. (The Sociology of "Developing Countries; 2). New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1982.

Amadi, Elechi. "The Novel in Nigeria." *Oduma Magazine* 2, 1 (August 1974), pp. 33, 35-37.

Amadi, Elechi. *Sunset in Biafra*. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1978.

Amadi, Elechi. "The Problems of Commitment in Literature." *Kunapipi* 5, 1 (1983), pp. 35-44.

Amadi, Elechi. *Ethics in Nigerian Culture*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educ. Books (Nigeria) Ltd., 1982.

Amuta, Chidi, "The Nigerian Civil War and the Evolution of Nigerian Literature." In *Contemporary African Literature*. Ed. Hal Wylie et al. Washington, D. C.: Three Continents Press, 1983, pp. 83-93.

Amuta, Chidi. "History, Society and Heroism in the Nigerian War Novel." *Kunapipi* 6, 3 (1984), pp. 57-70.

Amuta, Chidi, "The Ideological Content of Soyinka's War Writings." *African Studies Review* 29, 3 (Sept. 1986), pp. 43-54.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reelections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso Editions, 1983.

Balogun, F. Odun. "Populist Fiction: Omotoso's Novels." *African Literature Today* 13 (1983), pp.98-121.

Bell, Ian. "Patter-Merchants and Chancers." *Planet: the Welsh Internationalist* 60 (Dec./Jan. 1986-87), pp. 43-52.

Benson, Peter. *BLACK ORPHEUS, TRANSITION, and Modern Cultural Awakening in Africa*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986.

Booth, James. Writers and Politics in Nigeria. London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1981.

Bottomore, Tom, ed. A Dictionary of Marxist Thought. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983.

Caute, David. Fanon. London: Wm. Collins and Co. Ltd., 1970.

Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa Jemie and Ihechukwu Madubuike. Toward the Decelonization of African Literature, Vol.1. Washington, D. C.: Howard University Press, 1983.

Colmer, Rosemary. "Cyprian Ekwensi." In Essays on contemporary and post-colonial fiction. Eds. Hedwig Bock and Albert Wertheim. Munchen: Hueber, 1986, pp.47-66.

Cook, David. "The Potentially Popular Playwright." In Before Our Very Eyes [:] Tribute to Wole Soyinka. Ed. Dapo Adelugba. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd., 1987, pp. 89-103.

Coulon, Virgina. "Onitsha Goes National: Nigerian Writing in Macmillan's Pacesetter Series." Research in African Literatures 18, 3 (1987), pp. 304-19.

Crow, Brian. "Soyinka and His Radical Critics: A Review." Theatre Research International 12, 1 (Spring 1987), pp. 61-73.

David, Mary T. "The Writer Behind Bars: A Study of the Prison-Notes of Wole Soyinka and Ngugi wa Thiong'o." Paper presented at the 11th Annual African Literature Assoc. Conference, Michigan State University, East Lansing, 1986.

Dodson, Don. "The Role of the Publisher in Onitsha Market Literature." In Critical Perspectives on Nigerian Literatures. Ed. Bernth Lindfors. Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1976, pp. 195-213.

Dorfman, Ariel. "Notes from Chile." Granta 11 (1984), pp.232-43.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. Jagua Nana. 1961; rpt. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1975.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. People of the City. 1954; rpt. and rev. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1963.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. *Burning Grass* [:]*A Story of the Fulani of Northern Nigeria*. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1962.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. *Lokotown and other stories*. London, Ibadan, Nairobi and Lusaka: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1966.

Etherton, Michael. "Chapter 6: The Art Theatre: Soyinka's protest plays." In his *The Development of African Drama*. London: Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., 1982, pp. 242-84.

Fanon, Frantz. "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness" and "On National Culture." In his *The Wretched of the Earth*. Trans. Constance Farrington. Introd. Jean-Paul Sartre. New York: Grove Press Inc., 1968, pp. 148-205 and 205-48 respectively.

Feuser, Willfried. "Anomy and Beyond: Nigeria's Civil War in Literature." *Presence Africaine* (new bilingual series) 137-138 (1st and 2nd quarterlies, 1986), pp. 113-15.

Forsyth, Frederick. *The Making of an African Legend: The Biafra Story*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1977.

Forsyth, Frederick. *The Dogs of War*. London: Hutchinson, 1974.

Fraser, Robert. "Chapter 10: The poet and war, 1966-70." In his *West African Poetry: A Critical History*. Cambridge at the University Press, 1986, pp.251-72.

Gibbs, James. "Introduction." In *Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka*. Ed. James Gibbs. 1980; rpt. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1981, pp. 3-16.

Gibbs, James. "Wole Soyinka." *Index on Censorship* 3 (1984), back cover, pp. 42-44.

Gibbs, James. *Wole Soyinka*. New York: Grove Press, Inc. 1986.

Gold, Herbert. *Biafra Goodbye*. San Francisco: Twowindows Press, 1970.

Hunt, Geoffrey. "Two African Aesthetics: Wole Soyinka vs. Amilcar Cabral." In *Marxism and African Literature*. Ed. Georg M. Gugelberger. Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1985, pp. 64-93.

Irele, Abiola. "The Season of a Mind: Wole Soyinka and the Nigerian Crisis." In his The African Experience in Literature and Ideology. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1981, pp. 198-211.

Jones, Eldred Durosimi. "Editorial." African Literature Today. 13 (1983), pp. vii-x.

Jones, Eldred Durosimi. The Writings of Wole Soyinka. Rev. ed. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1983.

Katrak, Ketu H. "Yoruba Ritual, Myth, and 'The Fourth Stage:' Soyinka, Nietzsche, and Brecht--A Paradigm for Yoruba Tragedy." In her Wole Soyinka and Modern Tragedy. New York, Westport and London: Greenwood Press Ltd., 1986, pp. 17-58.

Killam, Douglas. "Cyprian Ekwensi." In Introduction to Nigerian Literature. Ed. Bruce King. 1971; rpt. London and Lagos: Evans Brothers and the University of Lagos Press, 1974, pp.

Laing, R. D. The Politics of Experience and the Bird of Paradise. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1967.

Larson, Charles. "Long Shadows of the Biafran War." Nation (Enugu) 3 (Dec. 1973), pp. 598-602.

Laurence, Margaret. Long Drums and Canons. London: Macmillan, 1968.

Lindfors, Bernth. "Postwar Popular Literature in Nigeria." Okike 9 (1975), pp. 52-63.

Lukacs, Georg. "The Historical Novel of Democratic Humanism." In his The Historical Novel. Trans. Hannah and Stanley Mitchell. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1962, pp. 301-423.

Lukacs, Georg and Leo Koffler. "Second Conversation: Society and the Individual." In Conversations with Lukacs. Ed. Theo Pinkus. Trans. Hans Heinz Holz and Theo Pinkus. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1975, pp. 41-80.

Mazrui, Ali A. The Trial of Christopher Okigbo. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1971.

Macebuh, Stanley. "Poetics and the Mythic Imagination." Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka. Ed. James Gibbs. 1980; rpt. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1981, pp. 200-12.

McEwan, Ian. "An Interview with Milan Kundera." Granta 11 (1984), pp. 19-37.

Meredith, Martin. The First Dance of Freedom: Black Africa in the Postwar Era. London: Sphere Books Ltd., 1985.

Milosz, Czeslaw. The Captive Mind. Trans. Jane Zielonko. New York: Vintage, 1981.

Moore, Gerald. Wole Soyinka. 2nd. ed. London: Evans Brothers Ltd., 1978.

Mortimer, John. Clinging to the Wreckage. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1985.

Nazareth, Peter. "Survive the Peace: Cyprian Ekwensi as a Political Novelist." In Marxism and African Literature. Ed. Georg M. Gugelberger. Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, Inc., 1986, pp. 165-77.

Ngara, Emmanuel. "Chapter 7: Wole Soyinka--Season of Anomy." In his Stylistic Criticism and the African Novel. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1982, pp. 99-116.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature. London: James Currey, 1986.

Nwapa, Flora. Never Again. Enugu: Nwamife Publ. Ltd., 1975.

Obasanjo, General Olusegun. My Command: An Account of the Nigerian Civil War. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd.,1981.

Obiechina, Emmanuel, ed. Onitsha Market Literature. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1972.

Obiechina, Emmanuel. An African Popular Literature: A Study of Onitsha Market Literature. Cambridge at the University Press, 1973.

Ogungbesan, Kolawole. "Wole Soyinka and the Novelist's Responsibility in Africa." In New West African Literature. Ed. Kolawole Ogungbesan. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1979, pp. 1-9.

Ojukwu, General C. Odumegwu. Principles of the Biafran Revolution. Michigan: Biafra Review, 1969.

Okeke-Ezeigbo, Emeka. "What is a National Literature?" Nigeria Magazine 149 (1984), pp. 1-13.

Okonkwo, Juliet I. "Biafra War Novels--A Review." Nsukka Studies in African Literature 4 (Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publ. Co. Ltd., Jan. 1986), pp.161-79.

Olanyin, Richard, ed. Nigerian History and Culture. London: Longman Group Ltd., 1985.

Osofisan, Femi. "The Quality of Hurt--A Survey of Recent Nigerian Poetry, Part One." Afriscope (Yaba) 4, 7 (1974), pp. 45-8, 51-3.

Osofisan, Femi. "Anubis resurgent: chaos and political vision in recent literature." Ch'indaba 2 (July-Dec. 1976), pp. 44-49.

Osofisan, Femi. Once Upon Four Robbers. 2nd ed. Ibadan: BIO Educational Services Ltd., 1982.

Palmer, Eustace. An Introduction to the African Novel. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1972.

p'Bitek, Okot. Song of Lawino and Song of Ocol. London and Ibadan: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1984.

Riemenschneider, Dieter. "The Biafra War in Nigerian Literature." In Jaw-bones and umbilical cords. Ed. Ulla Schild. Berlin: D. Reimer Verlag, 1985, pp. 77-88.

Rodney, Walter. How Europe Underdeveloped Africa. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1982.

Sesay, Kadiatu. "Ekwensi and Okpewho on the Nigerian Civil War." African Literature Today 9 (1987), pp. 99-103.

Sesay, Kadiatu. "Ekwensi and Okpewho on the Nigerian Civil War." African Literature Today 9 (1987), pp. 99-103.

Solomon, Maynard, ed. Marxism and Art. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1979.

Soyinka, Mrs. O. "Open Letter to General Gowon." L'Afrique Actuelle 213 (Dec. 1967), pp. 43-44.

Soyinka, Wole. The Trials of Brother Jero. In his Six Plays, London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1984, pp. 1-38.

Soyinka, Wole. Jero's Metamorphoses. In his Six Plays. London: Methuen and Co,. Ltd., 1984, pp. 39-86.

Soyinka, Wole. Kongi's Harvest. In his Collected Plays, Vol. 2. 1974; rpt, Oxford University Press, 1981, pp. 59-141.

Soyinka, Wole. Opera Wonyosi. In his Six Plays. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1984, pp. 295-407.

Umeh, Charles C. Double Attack. In African Theatre. Ed. Gwyneth Henderson. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educ. Books Ltd., 1973, pp. 53-70.

Bibliographies

Amuta, Chidi. "A Selected Checklist of Primary and Critical Sources on Nigerian War Literature." Research in African Literatures 13, 1 (Spring 1982), pp. 68-72.

McLuckie, Craig W. "A Preliminary Checklist of Primary and Secondary Sources on Nigerian Civil War/Biafran War Literature." Research in African Literatures 18, 4 (Winter 1987), pp. 510-27.